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Misused English words and expressions in EU publications

Preface to the May 2016 edition

It has been over two years since I last updated this guide. During this period, I have conducted a number of talks and workshops and have been able to benefit from a good deal of feedback. At the risk of being repetitive, I would once again like to emphasise that I aim neither to criticise the work of EU authors nor to dictate how people should speak or write in their internal or private correspondence. In addition to providing guidance to readers who are unfamiliar with the EU parlance, my comments are mainly designed for those who, for reasons of character or personal taste, would like their English to be as correct as possible[1]*, and those who need, or want, their output to be understood by people outside the European institutions, particularly in our two English-speaking member states. This takes up a principle that is clearly set out in the Court of Auditor's performance audit manual:*

> *'In order to meet the addressees' requirements, reports should be drafted for the attention of an interested but non-expert reader who is not necessarily familiar with the detailed EU [or audit] context'.*

Roughly translated, this means that we need to be aware of what constitutes our in-house jargon and attempt to avoid it, particularly in documents intended for publication. Of course, if a text is exclusively for internal consumption or it is not necessary for the 'European citizen' to be able to understand it, there may be grounds for ignoring the advice below.

During the last couple of years, I have heard two main objections to this basic premise. The first is an English-as-a-lingua-franca[2] *type of reasoning, i.e. that international English has taken on its own momentum and, to a certain extent, has its own rules. Native speaker usage, therefore, is no longer necessarily a model that needs to be followed. I must admit that I never found this particularly convincing to start with, but, more importantly, I do not hold it to be relevant here. Our most important 'client' is the European taxpayer (see 'citizen', below) and it does seem to be reasonable that English-speaking readers should be able to read our documents in versions that are linguistically at least as good as the translated versions (something that is currently often not the case). The second objection, which I also refute, is that some terms are now so ingrained in EU usage (the 'acquis') that we have to use them even if they are wrong and, more importantly, even if our readers do not understand them. This view sees certain past texts, particularly 'the treaties', as being akin to some kind of holy book handed down on tablets of stone, whose very word is sacred. In this connection, I have had endless discussions regarding a number of terms, including 'third country', which is not only unclear and misleading, but also remarkably easy to replace with something more sensible and meaningful.*

The following significant changes have been made since the last edition:
Added: Animate, anti-, asinine, citizen, concerned, consider as, debriefing, decommit, enterprise, fix, follow up, global, instance, notify, orientations, request, responsible, suppress, transversal, travels, treatment, verifications
Major changes to: case, contradictory procedure

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1 By 'correct' I mean in terms of UK and Irish native-speaker norms.

2 http://www.englishlinguafranca.com/what-is-elf/

Introduction

Over the years, the European institutions have developed a vocabulary that differs from that of any recognised form of English. It includes words that do not exist or are relatively unknown to native English speakers outside the EU institutions and often even to standard spellcheckers/grammar checkers ('*planification*', '*to precise*' or '*telematics*' for example) and words that are used with a meaning, often derived from other languages, that is not usually found in English dictionaries ('*coherent*' being a case in point). Some words are used with more or less the correct meaning, but in contexts where they would not be used by native speakers ('*homogenise*', for example). Finally, there is a group of words, many relating to modern technology, where users (including many native speakers) 'prefer' a local term (often an English word or acronym) to the one normally used in English-speaking countries, which they may not actually know, even passively ('*GPS*' or '*navigator*' for '*satnav*', '*SMS*' for '*text*', '*to send an SMS to*' for '*to text*', '*GSM*' or even '*Handy*' for '*mobile*' or '*cell phone*', *internet* '*key*', '*pen*' or '*stick*' for '*dongle*', '*recharge*' for '*top-up/top up*', '*beamer*' for projector etc.). The words in this last list have not been included because they belong mostly to the spoken language.

What do we mean by English?

English is the most widely-spoken language in the world[3] and is currently an official language in 88 sovereign states and territories; it therefore follows that it has many different versions and standards (British, Irish, American, Australian, Canadian, Indian, Jamaican, Singapore, etc.). However, our publications need to be comprehensible for their target audience, which is largely British and Irish, and should therefore follow a standard that reflects usage in the United Kingdom and Ireland[4]. This is not a value judgment on the other varieties of English, merely recognition of the need to communicate in the language that our readers understand best. Arguments that 'agent' or 'externalise', for example, are used with different meanings in the United States, Singapore or Australia miss the point, as does the view that we should accept the EU usage of, say, 'prescription' because it can be found with the same meaning in a handful of countries and states that have a civil law tradition, like Scotland, or historical links with France, like Quebec, the State of Louisiana and Vanuatu.

3 According to estimates, between 1.5 and 2 billion people speak English in one form or another. Although Chinese and Spanish claim to have more native speakers, English is geographically more widely spread and, if we include those who speak it as a second or foreign language, spoken by far more people (see: http://www.davidcrystal.com/DC_articles/English3.pdf).

4 See also: *The English Style Guide*, 13 August 2013, P.7. DG Translation, http://ec.europa.eu/translation/english/guidelines/documents/styleguide_english_dgt_en.pdf

Does it matter?

A common reaction to this situation is that it does not matter as, internally, we all know what 'informatics' are (is?), what happens if we 'transpose' a Directive or 'go on mission' and that, when our 'agents' are on a contract, they are not actually going to kill anyone[5]. Indeed, internally, it may often be easier to communicate with these terms than with the correct ones (it is reasonable to suppose that fewer EU officials know 'outsource' than 'externalise', for example). However, the European institutions also need to communicate with the outside world and our documents need to be translated – both tasks that are not facilitated by the use of terminology that is unknown to native speakers and either does not appear in dictionaries or is shown in them with a different meaning. Finally, it is worth remembering that, whereas EU staff should be able to understand 'real' English, we cannot expect the general public to be *au fait* with the EU variety.

'But the Commission uses the same terminology!'

A further objection that is often put forward is that we must use the same terminology as other institutions (the Commission in particular). That is to say, if the Commission uses the verb 'transpose', for example, we must all use the same term, even if we know it to be incorrect. This is a dangerous path to take, especially as the Commission itself recognises the need to improve the quality of its English and is often hampered in this by constraints that smaller institutions may not face. Furthermore, many of our most important documents are designed to be read by the general public and not just the Commission or the other institutions and should be drafted accordingly. Fortunately, there are a number of simple ways of getting round any mismatches that we may find between the terminology in the background legislation, or in Commission documents, and the terminology that we know to be correct. If, for example, we find ourselves having to quote a passage that contains an incorrect or in-house term, we must explain it if we want to be sure that our readers will understand. In the example of 'transpose', we might add a note saying something like 'term used at the Commission/in EU legislation to indicate …' (in this case, the incorporation of a Directive into national law)[6].

5 http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contract, meaning 4.

6 An example of good practice in this field comes from a Court draft report on 'Axis 3', which copes with the need to use the in-house term 'axis' by introducing it at the outset as follows: 'EU rural development policy for 2007 to 2013 is focused on three themes (known as "thematic axes")'.

How was this list prepared?

The original list was drawn from 'statements of preliminary findings' and draft reports by the Court of Auditors. Other words were supplied by English-speaking colleagues. The terms were then checked against dictionaries, native speakers in the UK, and the British National Corpus[7], which is a 100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken English from a wide range of sources, intended to represent a broad cross-section of current British English. Where possible, examples are quoted from official EU publications so as to give them more weight.

How should this list be used?

The problem with these words is that when people use them with the wrong meaning or in the wrong context, they are usually unaware that they are doing so. When we write 'the penalties "foreseen" in the Regulation', for example, it just sounds right, so most authors will not think twice about putting it down on paper. You might therefore find it useful to keep the summary list below to hand as a reminder for the next time one of these words comes up. This list may also help new staff to understand the terminology in existing texts and legislation. Please note that the opening list of words is hyperlinked to the main text.

Is the list complete?

No. It is a living document and is subject to constant change. Also, English is, of course, a living language, and it too changes all the time. In some cases, EU expressions may filter back into normal UK and Irish usage (although American English does have a much stronger influence). I feel that 'working group', as opposed to 'working party' may be one of these; another is almost certainly the unusual use of the term 'enterprise' instead of 'business' in the acronym 'SME'. On the other hand, the increasing, though as yet not widely recognised, use of 'actor' just to mean 'someone who does something' may be the result of the combined effect of both EU and US usage.

7 http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/x.asp?r1=&w=1192&h=670

Vocabulary and grammar – Countable/uncountable nouns

A number of the errors mentioned in this paper can be ascribed less to a question of meaning than to an aspect of English grammar that seems to have gone relatively unnoticed in the English teaching in European schools – the distinction between countable and uncountable (or mass) nouns. Countable nouns are words like 'biscuit', which can be counted, whereas 'uncountable', or 'mass' nouns are words like 'sugar' or 'milk', which do not normally take the indefinite article and do not usually have a plural. This distinction has grammatical consequences (compare 'some milk' with 'some biscuit**s'**, 'milk' with '**a** biscuit' and '**less** milk' with '**fewer** biscuits'). Unfortunately, nouns that are uncountable in one language may be countable in another and vice versa (like, for example, 'information' and 'damage', which are uncountable in English but countable in French), or countable in one meaning and uncountable in another. This concept is fundamental for an understanding of the errors found with words like 'action', 'aid', 'competence', 'conditionality', 'training', 'screening', 'precision' and 'prefinancing').

Action(s)
Actor
Actorness
Actual
Adequate
Agenda
Agent
Aids
Aim
Allow (to)
Anglo-Saxon
Animate
Anti-
Articultate/articulation
Assist at
Attestation
Atribute to
Axis

Badge
Bovine
Budget line

Cabinet
Caprine
Case
Citizen
Coherent/coherence
College
Comitology
Competence(s)
Complete (to complete)
Concern
Concerned
Conditionality
Conference
Consider as
Contractual (agent)
Contradictory procedure
Control

Dean
Debriefing
Decommit
Deepen
Define/definition
Delay
Detached/detachment
Dispose (of)
Do
Dossier

Elaborate
Enable (to)
Ensure (to)
Enterprise
Establish
Eventual/eventually
Evolution
Exercise
Expertise
Externalise/externalisation

Fiche
Financial envelope
Fix
Follow up
Foresee
Formulate
Frame

Global

Heavy
Hierarchical superior
Homogenise

Important
Incite
Inform (to)
Informatics
Inside
Instance
Intervention
Introduce

Jury
Justify/justification

Legislator

Mission
Modality
Modify/modification
Modulation

Name
Normally
Note
Notify to

Of
Operator
Opportunity
Orientations
Ovine

Permit (to)
Perspective
Planification
Porcine
Precise (to)/precision
Prescription
Project
Provide to
Punctual

Reasonability
Reflection (group)
Reinforce
Request
Respect
Responsible
Retain

Semester
Service
Shall
Sickness insurance
So-called
Suppress/suppression

Telematics
Third country
Training (a)
Transmit
Transpose
Transversal/transverse
Travel
Treatment
Trimester

Valorise
Verifications
Visa

Action(s)

Explanation

In EU texts, the word 'action' is used countably (see introduction) with a meaning akin to 'scheme', 'measure' or 'project' (actually, a number of terms, some incorrect, are used in this connection, although the exact relationship between them[8] is unclear). Although native speakers are usually convinced that this use is wrong, it is actually quite difficult to identify exactly why it sounds so peculiar. One reason is certainly the fact that, in this meaning ('the fact or process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim'[9]), 'action' is uncountable in English and therefore does not take a plural. In addition to this, apart from a number of very specific cases (a lawsuit, an armed conflict, a mechanism etc.), it just means a 'deed' or 'a thing done'. The awkward nature of the EU use is shown, among other things, by the fact that authors seem uncertain as to which verb to use with it, so in EU English, 'actions' (meaning projects) are 'taken', 'implemented', 'executed', 'performed' and even 'pursued', none of which manages to sound quite right. Generally speaking, there is a certain amount of confusion as to whether actions are sub-measures, measures are sub-actions or the two terms are synonymous.

Examples

Compare: *'Measures may include specific **actions** for the development of e-Government'*[10] *with '**Action** 1 **Measure** 1.1 - Town twinning citizens' meetings - EUR 5896000'*[11]. In the former, actions are sub-measures, whereas, in the latter, measures are sub-actions.

Alternatives

Alternatives: Where 'action' is used countably as a synonym for 'scheme', 'project' or 'measure', the latter are preferable. Generally speaking, there is a certain amount of confusion as to the terminology in this field and it would be useful if the EU institutions were more consistent.

Actor

Explanation

The Collins English dictionary defines an actor as 'a person who acts in a play, film, broadcast, etc.' or 'a person who puts on a false manner in order to deceive others (often in the phrase **bad actor**)'. However, in EU usage, 'actors' are often simply people who perform actions, or 'the people and/or organisations involved in doing something'. As this meaning is also found in US English, it also occurs in some sectors of international relations (mostly in the phrase 'state actors'). However, 'actor' is not normally used in this way in either the United Kingdom or Ireland, and is best avoided. My research in the UK shows that, in this meaning, it is either not understood by the general public or, where understood, is perceived as 'a poor translation'. In the second example below, respondents understood the 'actors' in question to be internationally known film stars.

8 EU funded activities ('interventions') in the member states and elsewhere are broken down into a number of sub-categories, called 'regimes', 'interventions', 'axes', 'projects', 'measures', 'actions' and even 'sub-programmes' and 'sub-measures'. Unfortunately, it is not very clear what the exact hierarchy among these various categories is and, in particular, whether 'actions' and 'measures' (and, for that matter, 'projects') are synonymous or whether one is a sub-category of the other(s). Occasionally (the first example), it is fairly clear that 'actions' are indeed a subset of 'measures'. Elsewhere, however, measures are clearly sub-actions; in other cases, the two words appear to be synonyms and are often used together ('actions and measures' or 'measures and actions') in a redundant repetitive rhetorical reiteration that does little to help the reader. Finally, there are cases where the reader is left with the feeling that some obscure but presumably important distinction is being made between the two.

9 http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/action

10 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011SA0009:EN:NOT

11 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:C2012/377/06:EN:NOT

Examples
Compare: *'Municipalities represent a major **actor** of the required change, thus their initiatives like the Covenant of Mayors should be further strengthened'*[12]. *'[The European Parliament] ... acknowledges and welcomes the success of state-building efforts by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, which have been supported by the EU and endorsed by various international **actors**'*[13].

Alternatives
It is very often preferable to rework the sentence, thus avoiding the problem altogether ('town councils play an important role in the process of change'). Often, as in the case of 'operators' below, you can resolve the problem by trying to identify exactly who you are talking about ('international aid organisations', for example) and using the appropriate term. In some circumstances, you may be able to use 'player', which can mean 'actor' in both senses ('town councils are major players in the process of change'), but this should be done with care.

Actorness

Explanation
This word is an extraordinary creation that manages to combine a noun of dubious pedigree (see 'actor' above) with a suffix (-ness) which, elsewhere in the English language, is only applied to adjectives and participles, producing a result that is both quite impenetrable and slightly childish. Even more unusually, although it is perhaps not actually an EU word as such, because it is not found so much in EU publications, it is used almost exclusively in publications about the EU in an attempt to express the concept of 'the quality of being an actor' (in the EU meaning of the word). The association between this word and the EU is so strong that, at the time of writing, if we google, say, 'US actorness', we still get a list of entries concerning the EU. Curiously, if we look up 'Russian actorness' or 'French actorness', Google thinks that we might have just misspelt 'actress'.

Example
Compare: *'EU **Actorness** in International Affairs: The Case of EULEX Mission in Kosovo, Perspectives on European Politics and Society'*[14].

Alternative(s)
participation, involvement, active participation, active involvement.

Actual

Explanation
'Actual' is sometimes used to refer to something that is happening now. However, in English it means 'real' or 'existing'.

Examples
*'This appropriation is intended to cover basic salaries of the staff, as listed in the attached table, based on the **actual** regulations and on the probable adjustments'* [15].

Alternatives
Current, present.

12 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0639:EN:NOT

13 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011IP0429:EN:NOT

14 www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/afet/dv/201/201205/20120530_article_eulex_1_en.pdf

15 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002B0486:EN:NOT

Adequate

Explanation
'Adequate' is frequently used with the meaning of 'appropriate'. However, its actual meaning is closer to 'satisfactory' or sometimes even 'barely satisfactory'. An 'adequate solution' to a problem may not be the best one, but it will do. An 'appropriate solution' is one that is fitting. Finally, in English, we say that something is 'adequate for' something else, not 'adequate to'

Example
*'The collection of the data during the reporting process should be **adequate** and proportionate to the objectives pursued'*[16].

Alternative
Appropriate, suitable, fitting.

Agenda

Explanation
An agenda is 'a list or programme of things to be done or considered'. It is not a book in which you write down your appointments.

Alternative
Diary.

Agent

Explanation
In British and Irish English, an 'agent' is normally either someone who works for a government intelligence agency (CIA, MOSSAD, MI5, G2) or a person who runs or represents a service agency (travel agent, estate agent). He/she can also be someone who represents the interests of an artist (actor, musician etc.) or, increasingly, someone (not necessarily a direct employee) who represents a company in its dealings with the public (ticket agent, baggage agent, call-centre agent). Its use to mean 'someone who is employed by the EU in any capacity' is incorrect and, incidentally, is not even sanctioned by the Staff Regulations or the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.

Example
*'The issue of vacancies mainly concerns **contract agents**; it is not the high turnover as such but rather a matter of finding staff with the appropriate expertise'*[17].

Alternatives
Staff, employee ('the problem of vacancies mainly concerns contract staff').

16 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R1033:EN:NOT

17 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:C2010/303/02:EN:NOT

Aids

Explanation
The word 'aid' is usually uncountable (see introduction) in the meaning covered here (=assistance, which is also uncountable) and should only be used in the singular. With an '-s', it is commonly used to refer to a disease (AIDS) or to devices that help you do something (e.g. 'hearing aids' or 'teaching aids'). Significantly, of the 3,232[18] examples of the word 'aids' included in the British National Corpus, nearly all those used to mean 'assistance' come from EU sources.

Example
*'State **aids** — Decisions to propose appropriate measures pursuant to Article 108(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union where the Member State concerned has accepted those measures'* [19].

Alternatives
Aid, subsidies.

Aim (with the aim to)

Explanation
There are 634 instances of 'with the aim to (do something) in EUR-Lex. 'With the aim' actually takes of + the gerund.

Example
*'List of specific recommendations from the Commission **with the aim to** reduce the administrative burden of REACH by SMEs while maintaining their ability to fulfil (sic) all REACH obligations'* [20].

Alternatives
With the aim of (doing something), with a view to (doing something, not do something).

Allow (to), Permit (to), Enable (to)

Explanation
When used to mean 'make it possible to', 'allow' cannot be used without a grammatical object, so we cannot say: 'at present, the statistics available do not **allow to** take account of all these situations'; 'allow' needs to be followed by a noun or pronoun such as 'us' (the statistics do not allow us to take account of all these situations). EUR-Lex contains around 600 cases where this construction is used wrongly. The same applies to 'permit to' and 'enable to'.

Example
*'When the interoperability constituent is integrated into a Control-Command and Signalling On-board or Track-side Subsystem, if the missing functions, interfaces, or performances do not **allow to** assess whether the subsystem fully complies with the requirements of this TSI, only an Intermediate Statement of Verification may be issued'* [21].

Alternatives
'Make it possible to', 'allow us to', 'enable us to', 'allow (an assessment) of'.

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18 Except in direct quotes, I have preferred to follow UK/Irish numbering conventions throughout as they are more widely understood than those currently provided in the EU's interinstitutional style guide, which can be found here: http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-360500.htm .

19 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011XC0312(01):EN:NOT

20 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0049:EN:NOT

21 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012D0088:EN:NOT

Anglo-Saxon

Explanation

In English, the term 'Anglo-Saxon' is generally used to describe a member of any of the West Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) that settled in Britain from the 5th century AD. Also, particularly in America, it is used to denominate white people, usually of the Protestant faith ('WASPS'), thus excluding large swathes of the population of that country. It follows that there is no such thing as an Anglo-Saxon country, or, as in the example below, an Anglo-Saxon agency or Anglo-Saxon capitalism. Furthermore, the Anglo-Saxon language ceased to exist in the 12th century (I am ill-informed about Brussels, but the last known speaker in Luxembourg was St Willibrord, 658-739[22]). This term is particularly inapplicable (and, I gather, irritating for those concerned) when used to describe the Irish, Scots and Welsh, who partly base their national identities on not being descended from the Anglo-Saxons[23] (everybody seems to have forgotten about the poor Jutes), and verges on the ridiculous when used to include West Indians or people like the incumbent US president, who, in EU terminology, would be the leader of the Anglo-Saxon world.

Example

*The **Anglo-Saxon** group of agencies reflect (sic) the previous dominance of **Anglo-Saxon** capitalism which was not disrupted by two world wars and the specific operational issues relating to Asian economies*'[24].

Alternatives

'English-speaking' when referring to the countries or the people, 'British' and 'American' ('Australian' or whatever) when referring to agencies, capitalism etc. The term may, however, be used if you are talking about something like the (presumed) 'Anglo-Saxon conspiracy' and you will often find it used ironically in this way in the British press (usually in inverted commas). However, it has negative connotations and should be avoided in any serious writing.

Animate

Explanation

Every now and then a job advertisement appears, saying, for example, that the Commission is looking for a 'head of sector to animate 12 staff members'. Looking in the Oxford online dictionary for a clue as to what this might mean, we can probably exclude the fact that the person in question will be expected to: 'bring [the staff members] to life', or 'give [them] the appearance of movement using animation techniques[25]'. This means that we are left with 'giving them inspiration, encouragement, or renewed vigour', which also sounds a trifle unlikely. Actually the new employee will probably find that he/she will just be expected to lead a team.

Examples

*'To support such a multidisciplinary and integrated approach, an EU Internal Security Consultative Forum **animated** by the Commission together with Member States, European Parliament, EU agencies, representatives of civil society, academia and of the private sector could be considered*'[26]. *'The continuation of the process of improving the Commission's reporting and management information systems is expected to be **animated** by the Director of Budget Execution*'[27].

Alternatives

Lead, head; in the first sentence above, we could say 'under the aegis of'.

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22 http://www.willibrord.lu/

23 Actually, recent research shows that the Anglo-Saxon genetic component is relatively low, even amongst white Englishmen (http://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/mar/18/genetic-study-30-percent-white-british-dna-german-ancestry).

24 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010AE1615:EN:NOT

25 Though the later years of certain former Soviet leaders may come to mind in this connection.

26 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0365

27 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464349023188&uri=CELEX:C2011/122A/01

Anti-

Explanation
The UK has a fraud office and a serious fraud office. It also has a national crime agency, drug squads and vice squads. In the EU, on the other hand, we have the Scandinavian sounding OLAF (the European Anti Fraud Office), anti-crime policies, anti-drugs trafficking, anti-cyber crime investigation and the like. Have perhaps EU authors and readers been labouring under the misapprehension that the abovementioned UK bodies are actually involved in perpetrating crime because they have no anti-?

Examples
*'A number of actions to meet these threats have been outlined within the framework of the Commission **anti-**cyber crime policy'*[28]. *'For example, the rapid exchange of information between VAT **anti-**fraud units in different Member States and the development of common risk analysis models were considered by stakeholders as important tools for the early detection of carousel fraud'*[29].

Alternative
You can usually drop the anti-.

Articulate/articulation

Explanation
In English, the verb 'articulate' normally means 'to put something into words' (e.g. 'he tried to articulate his fears'). Used intransitively, it means 'to speak' or 'to enunciate' (e.g. 'he had drunk so much that he had difficulty articulating'). Consequently, 'articulation' is 'the act or process of speaking or expressing in words'; it is also a synonym for a joint (principally in anatomy, botany and mechanics) and, by extension, the 'state of being jointed together'[30]. In EU texts, on the other hand, 'articulate' is commonly used, in a manner found in some Romance languages[31], to mean 'coordinate', 'link together', 'connect', 'organise' or, 'structure', and so 'articulation' is used to mean 'coordination', 'relationship', 'connection' etc. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to understand exactly what meaning is intended, resulting in the same text being translated very differently into other languages.

28 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0594

29 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0745

30 'Articulation' is also used as a technical term in music, sociology and social anthropology and certain schools of Marxist analysis (Gramsci, Althusser), but our readers would not necessarily be familiar with this.

31 http://www.wordreference.com/es/en/translation.asp?spen=articular

Examples
*'The European Parliament ... urges Turkey to **articulate** (= discuss? coordinate?) with the Iraqi Government, and other neighbours, measures to counter the negative impact of the hydroelectric dam project announced by the Turkish Government'*[32]. *'The strategy is **articulated** (= structured?) around four main 'pillars' that mutually reinforce each other'*[33]. *'While all groups aimed at generating policy recommendations, the main challenge remains to channel them into policy making at EU and national level, and **articulate** (=coordinate?) the work of the groups with that of Council Presidencies and the Commission'*[34]. *'This includes an appropriate **articulation** (= coordination, link?) with the Cohesion policy funds'*[35]. *'The European Parliament ... calls on the Commission to develop a Product Policy that ensures greater consistency between environmental product policies by better coordinating the **articulation** (=design, coordination, interaction?), revision and implementation of the different policy instruments'*[36].

Alternatives
Unless you actually mean to 'put something into words' or 'the act of putting something into words' or are referring to a joint, avoid these words and use 'coordinate', 'link together', 'connect', 'organise', 'structure', etc. for 'articulate' or the corresponding nouns for 'articulation'.

Assist at

Explanation
'Assist at' is archaic in the meaning of 'attend'.

Example
*'The representative of the Commission as well as other officials and interested agents of the Commission **assist at** the meetings of the Committee and the working groups'*[37].

Alternatives
Attend, be present at.

Attestation

Explanation
Attestation is not a common word in English and its most frequent meaning is: '*the act of attending the execution of a document and bearing witness to its authenticity*'. It is not normally a synonym for 'certificate' as in the quote below.

Example
*'It is therefore necessary to decide whether, for a given product or family of products, the existence of a factory production control system under the responsibility of the manufacturer is a necessary and sufficient condition for an **attestation** of conformity'*[38].

Alternative
Certificate.

32 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011IP0090:EN:NOT

33 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0196:EN:NOT

34 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0390:EN:NOT

35 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0811:EN:NOT

36 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010IP0485:EN:NOT

37 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31974D0234:EN:NOT

38 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011D0019:EN:NOT

Attribute to

Explanation
If you attribute something to someone, you are saying that he is thought to have made it/produced it. For example, 'this painting was attributed to Constable' means that he was thought to have painted it, not that someone gave it to him. You can also attribute something to a cause ('The EIB attributes this relative underperformance … to the financial crisis'). You cannot, however, attribute aid, compensation, contracts or licences.

Example
*The contracting authority was obliged to **attribute** a service contract exceeding the value of 236 000 euro using the proper tendering procedures*[39].

Alternatives
Allocate, grant, give, award, assign.

Axis

Explanation
The use of the word 'axis' that is often found in EU documents (= 'a coherent group of measures with specific goals[40]') appears to derive from the French (possibly from the meaning 'general direction' cited in the 'Petit Robert'). This usage does not exist in English, where the word is used primarily in geometry, anatomy and politics ('the Axis powers' or the 'axis of evil'). This term is particularly unfortunate in the plural because the untrained reader will almost inevitably mistake it for the plural of 'axe'. Curiously, in EU texts, 'axes' can also be roads, particularly important ones.

Examples
*Article 77 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (hereinafter the "General Regulation") provides that the interim payments and the final balance shall be calculated by applying the co-financing rate for each **priority axis** laid down by the Commission decision adopting the operational programme concerned*[41]. *'The Commission, by its Decision C(2008) 8573 dated 15 December 2008, reduced the ERDF assistance granted to the Operational Programme "**Access and Road axes**" for the period 1994-1999 in Greece by an amount of EUR 30.104.470,47. The relevant amount was effectively decommitted on 22 December 2008'*[42].

Alternatives
Depending on the context: priority axis = priority; road axis= road (sometimes trunk road); strategic axis= strategic priority etc. If you have to use the EU term here, you really do need to explain it.

39 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009TA1110%2801%29:EN:NOT

40 http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/agriculture/general_framework/l60032_en.htm

41 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0482:EN:NOT

42 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009SC1495:EN:NOT

Badge (badge, to badge)

Explanation
Although the use of the word 'badge' to mean 'service pass' seems to have gained currency in the English speaking world, it can still not be used to describe a lunch card or the little tag you use to clock in and out at work. Generally speaking it must be something attached to or worn on your outer clothing. There is also no verb 'to badge' in this context[43], and therefore no 'badging'. On a brighter note, the little signs saying 'badger' at the Court entrances afford some harmless amusement for English-speaking staff (see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Badger).

Examples
*'Until the **badging** systems have been harmonised (entry and flexi-time), there is a flexi-time **badge** reader in the cafeteria hall'.*
*'New topping up system for your children's **badge** at the European School'*

Alternatives
'Tag' for the clocking-in device, and 'clock in/out' for the verb. In the school example above, the object is actually a 'lunch card'.

Bovine, Ovine, Caprine, Porcine and Asinine animals

Explanation
Bovine animals are 'any of various chiefly domesticated mammals of the genus Bos, including cows, steers, bulls, and oxen, often raised for meat and dairy products'. So are 'cattle', which is the normal word in English. Similarly, ovine animals are sheep, caprine animals are goats, porcine animals are pigs and asinine animals are, well, asses (perhaps 'donkeys' would be a better word these days). However, whereas the word 'bovine' may be recognised by English speakers (often with the meaning 'sluggish, dull and stolid') and 'asinine' is relatively common, in the meaning 'extremely stupid or foolish', the terms 'ovine', 'caprine' and 'porcine' would only be known to specialists.

Example
*'Commission Decision of 26 July 2004 amending Annexes I and II to Council Decision 79/542/EEC as regards model certificates relating to the importation of **bovine animals** for slaughter and **bovine**, **ovine** and **caprine** fresh meat'*[44].

Alternatives
Cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and donkeys respectively.

Budget line

Explanation
'Budget line' is used so often that it has begun to sound right. However, it does not exist in English in the sense in which it is used in the EU institutions. Furthermore, even within EU terminology, there is no consensus as to what 'budget line' actually refers to (some say 'budget heading' and some 'budget item'), which is already a sign that it should be handled with care. The dictionary definition of 'budget line' is 'the alternative combinations of two different goods that can be purchased with a given income and given prices of the two goods', which is quite a different matter.

43 'to badge' normally means 'to mark with a badge'

44 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32004D0620

Example
*'Three budget titles in this policy group are almost exclusively managed by three corresponding Directorates General (DGs) of the Commission. These are DG and Culture (DG EAC) for **budget line** 15, DG Communication (DG COMM) for **budget line** 16 and DG Justice, Freedom and Security (DG JLS) for **budget line** 18'*[45].

Alternatives
Budget heading/item/title etc.

Cabinet

Explanation
'Cabinet' (usually pronounced 'cabinay' by English-speaking EU officials and 'cabinet' by others) is the term used at the Commission (and informally at the Court of Auditors) to refer to the private office of a Commissioner (or Member of the Court). Other than denoting a piece of furniture, the term is most commonly used in Britain to refer to 'the senior ministers of the British Government'. The 'British cabinet' is therefore 'the principal executive group of British government' and not the private office of the British member of the Commission or Court or the staff thereof.

Example
*'the British **cabinet**'.*

Alternatives
'Private office', sometimes, just 'office'.

Case (in case /in case of)

Explanation
It is actually quite difficult to use 'in case' and 'in case of' properly. Generally, speaking, in EU texts, 'in case' is used as if it were an elegant synonym for if, when or where (*'the fund can be mobilised in case (= if) the damage caused by a national disaster exceeds the threshold'*) and 'in case of' is used as another way of saying 'for' (*'farmers are subject to reductions in case of (=for) non-compliance'*). This may be misunderstood. In the first example, the author intended to say: 'we can mobilise the fund if and when the damage exceeds the threshold', but what he actually said was: 'we can mobilise the fund to prevent the damage from exceeding the threshold', which is a different thing entirely. Similarly, the second sentence was meant to mean: 'farmers' subsidies will be reduced if they do not comply', but actually means 'farmers' subsidies will be reduced as a precaution against someone not complying'.

Examples
*'Farmers are ... subject to possible reduction of the grubbing-up premium **in case of** non-compliance with certain requirements*[46].' *'**In case of** pigs and poultry, at least 20 % of the feed shall come from the farm unit itself*[47].' *'The likelihood of continuation of dumping **in case** the measures would be (sic) allowed to lapse is examined in the following*[48],' *'The fund can be mobilised **in case** the damages (sic) caused by a national disaster exceed the threshold of three billion euro'*[49].

45 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1109%2801%29:EN:NOT

46 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SA0007:EN:NOT

47 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012R0505:EN:NOT

48 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0264:EN:NOT

49 ECA preliminary report

Alternatives
Prefer 'for', 'if', 'when', 'where', if that is what you mean. It is also possible to say 'in the event of' or 'in cases of' (non-compliance, for example) or 'in the case of' (pigs).

Citizen

Explanation
'Citizen' has become something of a buzzword that EU authors like to include in their texts, presumably to emphasize the concept of 'European citizenship', as introduced under the Maastricht treaty. Actually, this word is decidedly less common in English than in some other languages and, in native texts, it is nearly always used to mean 'a legally recognized subject or national of a state[50]. The emphasis is very much on nationality, so, for example, if we say that 'steps have been taken to help citizens get back to work', we imply that non-citizens (of which there are a large number in the EU) are not expected to benefit. This means that a term that intends to evoke inclusion may actually have the opposite effect. An illuminating explanation to the background of the EU use of this term and its French Revolutionary and Marxist connections can be found in the glossary on www.marxists.org[51].

Examples
*'In addition, reviews of health care expenditure are promoting ways to increase effectiveness for **citizens** and improve value for*[52]. *'Tax on **citizens** travelling from airports within the EU'*[53]. *'… the budget should reflect actual budgetary needs and be in line with the principle of budgetary rigour and responsible use of **citizens**' money'*[54].

Alternatives
Use 'citizen' only if you really mean 'citizen' and particularly if you wish to exclude non-citizens. Otherwise, 'the public' (first example above), 'people' (second example), 'taxpayer' (third example).

Coherent/coherence

Explanation
Coherent means 'logical; consistent and orderly' or 'capable of logical and orderly thought'. In the former meaning, it is generally an internal characteristic of an argument or a publication, for example, and in the latter meaning, it is an internal characteristic of a person or thing (e.g. 'he is totally incoherent, he must have been drinking'). In the EU, on the other hand, it is frequently used with the meaning of 'in agreement with' or 'accordant with' (something else).

Example
*'The proposed Framework Programme is **coherent** with the objectives of the SET-Plan and EU 2020 Strategy. For more details please refer to the ex-ante evaluation and explanatory memorandum'*[55].

Alternative
Consistent/consistency.

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50 Its other, far less common meaning is 'an inhabitant of a particular town or city'.

51 'The word "citizen" in English lumps together a number of distinct meanings, which can only be represented by using French and/or German words. The French word citoyen means the participant in the political life of the community, the individual who is the carrier of political rights, the enjoyer of 'positive freedom'. During the French revolution, when people addressed one another as 'Citizen Marat', or whatever, the word was citoyen. On the other hand, the German word Bürger most graphically expresses the person as an individual participant in the economic life of the community, the bearer of social rights, the right not to be interfered with and to carry on any activity that does not harm others, the enjoyer of 'negative freedom'.

52 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0906

53 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:92008E006521

54 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52006BP0241

55 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0072:EN:NOT

College

Explanation
In the English-speaking world, 'college' normally refers to one type of educational establishment or another (university college, Eton College, etc.). It can also be a body of electors ('electoral college'). In the EU, on the other hand, it is used to mean the actual Court or Commission, as opposed to the institution and its staff. The only context where it is traditionally used in a similar meaning is the ecclesiastical Latinism: 'the college of cardinals (from Collegium Cardinalium). The term 'college of Commissioners' has become enshrined in EU usage, but we should use the word sparingly when referring to other bodies. Especially when it is used in isolation ('the college' tout court), readers outside the institutions may think we are referring to a school of some sort. In the example below, we can replace the word 'college' with 'Court' with no loss of meaning.

Example
*'The commitment will be confirmed again in the new building policy, to be adopted by the **College** before the 2007 summer break'*[56].

Alternative
'The Court'/'the Commission'. If it is necessary to specify beyond doubt that it was the actual Court and not the institution as a whole, we can say 'the Court itself' or 'the Court's members' ('the Members of the Commission') or even just 'the Members' (or the 'Commissioners').

Comitology

Explanation
There are 1,253 instances of the word 'comitology' in EUR-Lex. However, not only does the word not exist outside the EU institutions, but it is formed from a misspelt stem (committee has two 'm's and two 't's) and a suffix that means something quite different (ology/ logy means 'the science of' or 'the study of')[57]. It is therefore highly unlikely that an outsider would be able to deduce its meaning, even in context. Fortunately, as the quote below shows, the procedure has been abolished. Unfortunately, the term seems to have survived.

Example
*'The Commission must draft new rules setting out the powers and workings of the bodies replacing the Committees in the framework of the now-abolished **comitology** procedure, to ensure that the new system operates properly'*[58].

Alternative
The official term is 'committee procedure'.

Competence(s)

Explanation
'Competence' in its meaning of 'the legal authority of a court or other body to deal with a particular matter' is uncountable (see introduction) in English and therefore does not usually take a plural. We normally speak of the 'powers' of bodies or institutions rather than their 'competences'.

56 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007SA0002:EN:NOT

57 Yes, I am aware that Parkinson first used the term in 1955, but (a), he meant something different and (b) he was being funny.

58 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011AE0537:EN:NOT

Example
*'This Directive fully respects the **competences** of Member States, particularly on employment, labour and social matters'*[59].

Alternative
Powers, jurisdiction.

Complete (to complete)

Explanation
To 'complete' means to finish, end or terminate. It therefore implies that whatever is being completed was somehow incomplete before the completion occurred. In EU texts, however, this word is often used to mean that something extra has been added to supplement something that, in itself, was actually complete beforehand.

Example
*'The French Republic, in July 2000, proposed a Regulation, to **complete** Regulation (EC) No 1347/2000, aimed at facilitating, through the abolition of exequatur, the exercise of cross-border rights of access in the case of children of divorced or separated couples, aged up to 16 years'*[60].

Alternative
Supplement, add to.

Concern (concerning, for what concerns)

Explanation
We often find paragraphs in reports that begin with 'concerning XYZ, the Court found that ...', instead of 'with regard to'. This sounds very odd in English. The rather endearing Gallicism 'for what concerns' is also remarkably common, even in published documents (30 hits in EUR-Lex, many of which are recent).

Examples
*'**Concerning** the achievement[s] of the six EFA goals, the PEDP report reports that sound progress is being made ...* [61]*' '**For what concerns** resettlement, Member States will receive financial incentives (lump sums) every two years ...'*[62].

Alternatives
With regard to, in respect of, in terms of. However, in English, there is usually no need to start a sentence with a direct reference to the subject matter, as you would in certain other languages, and a different word-order might be better (*'The PEDP report states that sound progress is being made towards the achievement of the six EFA goals.'*). Furthermore, where this introductory phrase merely repeats the paragraph heading, it should be eliminated altogether.

59 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009L0050:EN:NOT

60 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52002AE0029:EN:NOT

61 Draft report on development aid

62 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0751:EN:NOT

Concerned

Explanation
There are a number of adjectives in English which have a different meaning when used after the noun. One of these is 'concerned'. Before the noun, it means 'worried', after the noun, it means 'involved in or affected by something'. A concerned official is therefore one that is worried about something (perhaps the opposite to a detached official, see below), whereas if you want to contact the official responsible for something, you should write to the official concerned. Incidentally, 'responsible' is similar in this respect.

Examples
*'It will allow the objectives of the Year to penetrate more easily and reach out [to] interested and **concerned** stakeholders at national, regional and local level*[63]*'. 'This list should not be used in order to target the **concerned** officials with a marketing campaign or to profile them, unless in accordance with applicable data protection legislation'*[64].

Alternatives
In the first example, both interested and concerned may be superfluous as the people concerned are already stakeholders (can one be a stakeholder and not be affected?). In the second example, 'the officials concerned'.

Conditionality

Explanation
'Conditionality' is a clumsy word that should be used parsimoniously (see 'Reasonability'). Moreover, it is not an erudite synonym of 'condition' but a derivative of 'conditional' and means simply 'the state of being conditional'[65]. Finally, it is an uncountable noun (see introduction) that cannot be used in the plural, despite the 156 plural hits in EUR-Lex. It should perhaps be noted that this word is also used, equally incomprehensibly, by the IMF[66].

Example
*'[The European Parliament] ... calls for it to be made possible for the actors involved in the management of operational programmes to influence **conditionalities**'*[67].

Alternative
Often just 'conditions' or 'the conditions imposed/set'.

63 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52005SC0690

64 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52009XX0107(02)

65 http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Conditionality

66 http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/conditio.htm

67 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011IP0316:EN:NOT

Conference

Explanation
In-house terminology uses 'conference' to refer to a simple talk or lecture, where one speaker comes to impart his knowledge on a given subject. In English, a conference is a high-level meeting for consultation or exchange of information or discussion with a number of speakers, often lasting several days, like the Kyoto conference, or in the legal context, a one-to-one meeting between a barrister and his client. In the example below, an outside reader would have understood that the medical service had invited a number of experts (doctors, researchers, university lecturers and politicians) to discuss the problem of infectious diseases and that one of them, Dr Arendt, would be taking questions. In fact, there was just Dr Arendt and he was giving a talk. Generally speaking, in the EU institutions, it is often very difficult to work out for what sort of training or cultural event one is applying.

Example
'In this context, and in response to the concerns expressed by a number of colleagues, the Medical Service is organizing a ***conference*** *on Tuesday 12 October... A specialist doctor, M. Vic Arendt, will answer any of your questions'*[68].

Alternatives
Talk, lecture, presentation.

Consider as

Explanation
The American Heritage Book of English Usage states that the 'as' in 'consider as', is 'not sufficiently well established to be acceptable in writing'. In any case, it is redundant.

Examples
'The Commission did not issue guidance on what should be ***considered as*** *a 'new product or new technique' in relation to the measure for modernising farms*[69]*', This increase of the initial pre-financing from the specific allocation for the YEI paid to operational programmes supported by the YEI (irrespective of the form of the programming arrangements) is* ***considered as*** *adequate and fully in line with the specific rules applicable to the YEI'*[70].

Alternatives
Consider or consider to be.

Contractual (agent)

Explanation
'Contractual' means 'laid down in a contract' (e.g. 'contractual terms'), it does not mean 'under contract'. Although the term is widely used in the latter way in the institutions, it does not appear at all in the current *Staff Regulations* or in the *Conditions of Employment of other Servants*.

68 Email from 'your administration' on 7/10/2010

69 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013SA0012&from=EN

70 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52015PC0046&from=EN

Example
*'The breakdown of staff employed at 31/12/2009 by the executive agencies was as follows: Temporary agents (officials seconded by the Commission and agents recruited by the agency) | **Contractual agents** | Seconded national experts | Total |'*[71].

Alternative
Contract (staff).

Contradictory procedure

Explanation
'Contradictory procedure' does not exist in English as a fixed expression, although, of course, a procedure can be contradictory[72]. The dictionary definitions of contradictory are: 'involving, of the nature of, or being a contradiction' or 'given to contradicting', so it is unlikely that an uninitiated reader would appreciate that the notion of the 'contradictory procedure' actually regards the right of any individual to give his/her side of the story. Fortunately, this term is no longer officially used by the Court of Auditors to describe its inter partes discussion procedure with the Commission, but less fortunately, it has been replaced by 'adversarial procedure', which, if anything, is even worse.

Examples
*'All audits result in detailed findings being sent to the auditee to confirm the accuracy of the Court's observations, followed by a "**contradictory procedure**" on the final text of the audit report'*[73]. *'The rights of the operators should be guaranteed through a **contradictory procedure** with its Flag State, the criteria for the listing should be clear, objective and transparent, and the de-listing process when the criteria are not met any longer should also be foreseen'*[74].

Alternatives
The EU's financial regulation lays down 'adversarial procedure' as the technical term for the Court of Auditor's hearing of the Commission with regard to its findings (although, in the 1990s, it was called, rather more informatively, the 'bilateral discussion procedure'[75]). However, 'contradictory procedure' is still used outside this context (e.g. 'the paying agency held a contradictory with the farmer'), and we should bear in mind that people beyond our immediate circle will not understand it. In most cases, it is better to drop the legalese ('inter partes hearing', 'audi alteram partem', and the like) and rework the sentence in layman's terms, e.g. 'the paying agency called the farmer in to discuss the matter'.

71 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0281:EN:NOT

72 Try googling 'youtube argument clinic' for an example of a contradictory procedure.

73 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SA0019:EN:NOT

74 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007SC1336:EN:NOT

75 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:31995Y1114(01)&qid=1464351447549&from=EN

Control (to control, a control)

Explanation
To control does not usually mean 'to audit' 'check' or 'verify'[76] and 'a control' is not normally 'a check' or 'an inspection'. Its most common meaning is 'to exercise authoritative or dominating influence over; direct'. Thus, if we say that 'the Commission controlled project X in the Member States', we do not mean that the Commission audited it, but that the Commission ran it. In combination with a few other terms contained in this list, this misuse can end up sounding quite sinister (e.g. 'the Commission's contract agents were on a mission in the United Kingdom to control execution under Axis II'). Used as a noun, we do not 'carry out' or 'perform' controls. Controls are more likely to be systems that are in place (passport controls, for example). Hence, we can say that the Court checked to see if the key controls were in place, but not that it carried out controls. Furthermore, when talking about systems, the best term will often be 'safeguard'. For example, 'a number of safeguards are built into the system to ensure that funds are spent correctly'.

Examples
*'Administrative checks must be undertaken on all applications for support and payment claims, and cover all elements that are possible and appropriate to **control** by administrative means'*[77]. *'Apart from the annual review of the reference amount, customs authorities are not obliged to carry out **controls** after authorisation'*[78].

Alternatives
Audit, check, verify, inspect/inspection, safeguard.

Dean

Explanation
In British and Irish usage, a 'dean' is either a relatively senior priest or the head of a university faculty. At the Court of Auditors, on the other hand, it is the name given to the doyen or chair of the institution's audit chambers.

Example
*'Each Chamber shall elect one of its Members as **Dean** in accordance with the conditions laid down in the implementing rules'*[79].

Alternative(s)
'Dean' is now the official title at the Court, but, in our dealings with the outside world, we should not be surprised if people think that we have our own in-house clergy (see also 'hierarchical superior' and 'college'). When explaining the role to outsiders, 'chair' (-woman, - man, -person) or 'doyen' might be more informative.

76 This meaning is not mentioned at all in the Oxford online dictionary and is described by Merriam Webster as 'archaic' (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/control).

77 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1109%2801%29:EN:NOT

78 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006SA0011:EN:NOT

79 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010Q0423%2801%29:EN:NOT

Debriefing

Explanation
To debrief means 'to question (someone, typically a soldier or spy) about a completed mission or undertaking'. In the EU institutions, on the other hand, 'debriefing' is used to indicate 'a meeting for giving information or instructions'. This would be a briefing.

Examples
*'Upon return, the participant organised an internal meeting to explain the experience to his colleagues and to disseminate the knowledge to his direct working environment. The participant is also planning to organise another **debriefing** after the evaluation meeting in Prague'*[80]. *'Weekly **debriefing** meetings and regular dialogue between Executive Board members and area heads are deemed to be more conducive to effective management than lengthy quarterly or half-yearly reports'*[81].

Alternative
Briefing.

Decommit

Explanation
The Microsoft Word spell checker thinks that 'decommit' does not exist and the Oxford English, Oxford on-line, Merriam Webster and Macmillan dictionaries seem to agree. It follows that there is also no such thing as a 'decommitment'.

Examples
*'This involves the re-entry of commitment appropriations concerning structural funds which have been **decommitted**'*[82]. *'The Commission shall automatically **decommit** any portion of a budget commitment for a rural development programme that has not been used for the purpose of prefinancing or for making interim payments'*[83].

Alternative
Cancel.

Deepen

Explanation
'Deepen' is a difficult word to use figuratively. In addition to its literal meaning (e.g. deepen a well), it can also be used to mean 'to increase', 'improve' or 'boost'. However, it cannot be used indiscriminately in this way and, in this meaning, can only be associated with a few abstract terms like 'knowledge' or 'understanding'. It can also never be used to mean 'look into something more deeply', as in 'deepen an issue'. Unfortunately, many of the 1,000-odd examples in EUR-Lex are incorrect in one of these respects.

80 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013SC0098

81 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010TA0618(01)

82 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464352366056&uri=CELEX:52014XC1113(02)

83 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1306

Examples
*'Portugal shall **deepen** the use of shared services in public administration'*[84]. *'The extension of SJU would enable stakeholders to … **deepen** strategic partnerships'*[85]. *'Further **deepen** the internal market for defence and security'*[86]. *'The Commission intends to **deepen** the dialogue with Turkey on visas'*[87]. *'There is clear evidence that the partnership arrangements have **deepened** and widened'*[88].

Alternative(s)
Improve, increase, bolster, boost, develop.

Define/definition

Explanation
In English, 'define' means 'to state the precise meaning of' (for example 'we have already defined the meaning of control'). It does not mean 'establish', 'set out', 'lay down' or 'illustrate'.

Examples
*'The main tasks and activities of the IMI Joint Undertaking shall be: (a) to ensure the establishment and sustainable management of the Joint Technology Initiative on "Innovative Medicines"; (b) to **define** and carry out the annual implementation plan referred to in Article 18 via calls for project'*[89]. *'A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the **definition** and implementation of all Union policies and activities'*[90].

Alternatives
Establish, lay down, set out, draft, establishment, drafting, design.

Delay

Explanation
'Delay' is often used in the EU to mean 'deadline' or 'time limit'. In English, on the other hand, 'delay' always refers to something being late or taking longer than is necessary. You cannot, therefore comply with (or 'respect') a delay.

Example
*'In order to respect the **delay** for transmission, the Commission can make small changes to the notification provided that they are agreed with the notifying member prior to transmission'*[91].

Alternatives
Time limit, deadline, time allowed.

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84 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32013D0064:EN:NOT

85 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013SC0262:EN:NOT

86 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0542:EN:NOT

87 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:C2013/210E/01:EN:NOT

88 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006SA0010:EN:NOT; We also find deepen strands of strategy, deepen EMU, deepen synchronisation, deepen alignment, deepen democracy and many more

89 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1216(03):EN:NOT

90 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1214(06):EN:NOT

91 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011R0016:EN:NOT

Detached/detachment

Explanation
'Detached' means 'separated', 'disconnected' or standing apart from others (as in 'detached house') or, in the case of a person, 'marked by an absence of (emotional) involvement'. A 'detached official' would therefore be one who worked in an objective manner (no doubt a laudable quality, but not what is usually meant).

Example
*'The table below shows staffing levels in ACP Delegations before and after devolution. External staff comprise Local Agents, Contract Agents, **Detached** National Experts and Young Experts'*[92].

Alternative
Seconded/secondment.

Dispose (of)

Explanation
The most common meaning of 'dispose of' is 'to get rid of' or 'to throw away'; it never means 'to have', 'to possess' or 'to have in one's possession'. Thus, the sentence '*The managing authority disposes of the data regarding participants*' does not mean that it has them available; on the contrary, it means that it throws them away or deletes them. Similarly, the sentence below does not mean: 'the Commission may not have independent sources of information', it means that the Commission is not permitted to discard the sources that it has.

Example
*'The Commission may not be able to assess the reliability of the data provided by Member States and may not **dispose of** independent information sources (see paragraph 39)*[93].

Alternatives
have, possess, xyz is/are not available to [the Commission].

Do

Explanation
'To do' is a rather weak word: 'to perform' and 'to carry out' are often better. Using them also avoids the all too common confusion between 'to do' and 'to make'. A very odd use of 'do' is also found at the bottom of a lot of EU legislation: '***Done at (in) Luxembourg/Brussels***'; this would be better as just 'Brussels' (or 'Luxembourg'), assuming that we need to mention it at all.

Example
*'A third source of revision is the statistical adjustments **done** at national level and at European level to take account of the seasonality and the calendar effects affecting time series*[94].

Alternatives
Perform, carry out, undertake.

92 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006SC0977:EN:NOT

93 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012AA0007:EN:NOT

94 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008DC0340:EN:NOT

Dossier

Explanation
A 'dossier' is a file, often a copious one containing detailed records on a particular person or subject. However, it is not a particularly common word and not one that readers will necessarily fully understand or even know how to pronounce[95]. Also it is mostly used in certain specific contexts (intelligence agencies, for example – compare 'agent' above[96]). In EU texts, in addition to being overused in this meaning at the expense of 'file', it is also employed metaphorically, where there is no actual file, to mean 'subject', 'issue' or 'question'.

Examples
*'The Commission recognises how difficult it is to speed up its financing decisions, because of the huge mass (sic) of **dossiers**, the complexity of the management rules ... and the complexity of the internal and external consultation process'*[97]. *'Turkey has maintained close official contacts with the Iraqi authorities, and the Prime Minister visited Iraq, including the Kurdish Regional Government. Turkey engaged with Iran on the nuclear **dossier**'*[98]. *'The adoption of implementing measures in the field of taxation following the Comitology procedure is still the main obstacle to getting the proposal adopted. Probably only an amendment to the Treaty could give new momentum to this **dossier**'*[99].

Alternatives
If you mean file, use 'file' wherever possible; otherwise question, issue, matter, subject or even procedure.

Elaborate

Explanation
To elaborate means 'to work out carefully or minutely' or 'to develop to perfection'. It does not mean to write something up. It is possible to elaborate a strategy, but not a document.

Example
*'Additional background information on less commonly used species, and habitats is available in the background information document **elaborated** by the Group of Experts'*[100].

Alternatives
Draft, draw up, prepare.

95 See comments under http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dossier

96 The example given in the Cambridge dictionary is illuminating: 'the secret service probably has a dossier on all of us'.

97 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52002SA0002

98 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011SC1201:EN:NOT

99 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52003DC0614:EN:NOT

100 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32007H0526:EN:NOT

Ensure (to)

Explanation
'To ensure' means 'to make sure or certain'. However, it is often used in the EU to mean 'to provide'. 'Ensure' should never be followed by 'to' and an indirect object.

Example
*'Establish national plans for rare diseases in order to **ensure** to patients with rare diseases universal access to high quality care, including diagnostics, treatments and orphan drugs throughout their national territory on the basis of equity and solidarity throughout the EU'*[101].

Alternatives
Provide (with), guarantee.

Enterprise

Explanation
If you look up 'enterprise' on Google images, you get pages and pages of space ships, a few aircraft carriers, a car rental firm and the odd reference to IT architecture. On the other hand, if you look up 'company', you get pages and pages of, well, companies. This is because, despite the best efforts of a number of international organisations, including the EU, 'enterprise', is not the default term for 'company', 'business' or 'firm'[102]. In the UK and Ireland, you are unlikely to hear people saying things like 'my father has his own enterprise', and you will not find many firms with names like 'the Winsor tie enterprise' (although there is a 'Winsor tie company'). It must be said that the once slightly bizarre sounding 'SME' (small and medium-sized enterprise) has certainly caught on as an acronym, but, significantly, the British press often feels the need to specify that what is actually meant is 'company', business' or 'firm'[103]. Similarly the British 'federation of small businesses' (not enterprises) refers to its members as 'small businesses' or small firms' but never as 'small enterprises'.

Examples
*'They enhance the entrepreneurial skills of those seeking to set up an **enterprise**'*[104]*. Persons starting their own **enterprise**, including self-employment'* [105].

Alternatives
Business, company and, in some cases, firm.

Establish

Explanation
'Establish' is often used in the EU to mean to 'draw up' or 'draft'. In English, it actually means to 'set up', 'found' or 'secure'. You can establish a company or criteria, but not a report.

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101 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008PC0726R%2802%29:EN:NOT

102 It is much more common in the meanings of ' a project or undertaking, especially a bold or complex one', 'initiative and resourcefulness' or even 'entrepreneurial activity'.

103 See, for example : http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/businessclub/11430701/SMEs-failing-to-guard-against-cyber-attacks-Government-warns.html

104 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464353939351&uri=CELEX:52001DC0629

105 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52015SC0206

Example
*'During the reporting phase the Agency shall **establish** a final inspection report containing details of the conduct of the inspection'*[106].

Alternatives
Draw up, draft, produce, prepare.

Eventual/eventually

Explanation
Eventual means 'occurring at some unspecified time in the future', eventually means 'in the end'. However, in EU texts, these words are often used with a meaning akin to 'possible' and 'possibly'. Thus, the sentence 'eventually, the beneficiary provided documentary evidence', which the author intended to mean something like 'if any documentary evidence were necessary/available, the beneficiary provided it', actually means that it took the beneficiary a long time to do so. In the examples below, 'eventual' is used to mean 'possible', whereas its actual meaning would be 'in the long term'.

Examples
*'They both opposed an **eventual** imposition of anti-dumping measures as they considered that it could lead to a cessation of imports of the product concerned from the PRC'*[107]. *'The results thus obtained will be taken into consideration by the Commission with regard to an **eventual** new request for derogation'*[108].

Alternatives
Possible, any, the possibility of. It may sometimes be better to rework the sentence (e.g. eventual claims should be sent to the paying office = if you wish to make a claim, please write to the paying office).

Evolution

Explanation
The word 'evolution' is both heavily overused and misused in our texts. Above all, it does not sit very well with the adjective 'negative' and a 'negative evolution' is something of an oxymoron. There are a number of more common words that should be preferred.

Example
*'The increase in transport costs leads to a **negative evolution** of exports and consumption (households have to face increased costs of transport)'*[109].

Alternatives
Development, trend, change, downturn/upturn, etc.

106 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006R0736:EN:NOT

107 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0812:EN:NOT

108 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0812:EN:NOT

109 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008SC2208:EN:NOT

Exercise

Explanation
'Exercise' is often used in EU documents to indicate a procedure or process of some sort or a period in which something is done.

Example
*'The **promotion exercise** is different in each institution. At the Commission and Parliament, the system involves the accumulation of points: officials are promoted when they reach the threshold for promotion'*[110].

Alternative
Procedure.

Expertise

Explanation
Expertise is an uncountable noun (see introduction) meaning 'expert knowledge or skill in a given field' or 'expertness'. In EU documents, on the other hand, it is not only countable, but it is also used to mean 'an appraisal by an expert'. Therefore, in the EU, 'expertises' (pronounced 'experteezes') may be conducted, performed, executed, carried out, done or even made.

Examples
*'Priority should be given to the ORs' health system, training and education in order to optimise local human resources and **expertises** as greatest potential drivers of growth in the ORs'*[111]. *'The authority had obtained **an expertise** on the question if it was necessary to turn the southern runway parallel to the northern one, or if the runways could be used as a V-runway system'*[112].

Alternative(s)
Expertise (singular – first sentence), expert advice or an (expert) opinion assessment, appraisal or evaluation; in some cases, where it is the value of an asset that is at stake, 'valuation'.

Externalise (externalisation)

Explanation
Although 'externalisation' has become something of a buzzword in the UK public administration, it is a recent acquisition and has not yet reached the dictionaries[113], or even Wikipedia, in the meaning of 'outsourcing'[114], so readers may be unclear as to exactly what it means. It is therefore preferable to use a more established term if we wish to express the idea that a given service has been contracted out to a private company.

110 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0042:EN:NOT

111 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012AR1685:EN:NOT

112 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008D0948:EN:NOT

113 http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/externalize

114 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Externalization

Example
*'Furthermore, the White Paper required that the decision to **externalise** should be taken on a consistent basis across the European Commission, so that similar instruments are used in similar cases'*[115].

Alternatives
Outsource/outsourcing, contract out, send out.

Fiche

Explanation
Fiche is a useful word, but it is French. Its only use in English is to indicate the (somewhat outdated) microfiche.

Example
*'Where other information contained in the product information **fiche** is also provided, it shall be in the form and order specified in Annex III'*[116].

Alternatives
Sheet, document, record, entry.

Financial envelope

Explanation
This curious term is used to mean something like: 'the total budget available for something'. It is so odd[117] that it is rather surprising to see that it has not only made it into the second decade of the twenty-first century, but, with 500 hits in EUR-Lex, many of them recent, it is going so strong that the Commission's new state-of-the-art machine translation system[118] cheerfully offers it as an equivalent for 'financial allocation' and the like. This term is often defended tooth and nail by people who should really know better simply because it is believed to be in one of the sacred texts[119].

Example
*'The key parameters of the macroeconomic adjustment programme, notably the duration of the programme and the overall **financial envelope** remain unchanged'*[120].

Alternatives
Budget, financial allocation.

115 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009SA0013:EN:NOT

116 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R1062:EN:NOT

117 By a strange multilingual association of ideas, it has always made me think of a bribe.

118 This is not so surprising, as Commission's machine translation system works on a statistical basis, and the underlying database is stocked with EU documents containing this error. A well-known on-line translation service, which operates on different underlying information, translates it, in the example given here, as 'overall budget', which seems about right.

119 As I understand it, these are the treaties, the financial regulation and possibly the staff regulations (usually written, meaningfully, with initial capital letters). Actually, I have not been able to find out which one uses the term, although the financial regulation does talk of a 'budgetary envelope'.

120 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0679:EN:NOT

Fix

Explanation
The main meanings of 'fix' are to repair and to attach. It can also be used informally to mean 'establish' or 'set' if you are talking about a date, a time or a price. It should be avoided elsewhere in this meaning.

Examples
*'The framework programme shall … establish the scientific and technological objectives to be achieved by the activities provided for in Article 180 and **fix** the relevant priorities'*[121]. *'For the 2014-2020 programming period, under certain conditions **fixed** in the regulation (Article 145(7)), the Commission must adopt a decision of a net financial correction even if the Member State agrees to the correction'*[122].

Alternatives
Establish, set, set out.

Follow up

Explanation
To follow up is a verb; follow-up (with a hyphen) is a noun. Follow up (the verb) is pronounced with the stress on the 'u' of 'up', whereas follow-up (the noun) is stressed on the first 'o' of 'follow'. Normally, to follow up means to pursue or investigate something further, and a 'follow-up' is something that is done in order to be certain that an earlier action was effective. Neither has anything to do with monitoring, except, at a push, in medicine.

Examples
*'In fact, the very limited number of transactions carried out by only a few taxable persons, often already known and identified for their activities in the sector of precious metals, should in principle allow for an adequate **follow-up** and control of the sector via conventional measures'*[123]. *More attention needs to be paid to the reports of the Office of the Auditor General. The committee on oversight of public finances needs to develop a mechanism to **follow up** the implementation of its recommendations'*[124].

Alternatives
Monitor, monitoring.

121 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12008E/TXT

122 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014SC0286

123 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0623

124 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013SC0416

Foresee

Explanation
People find it inexplicably difficult to use this word properly, so maybe the safest policy is to avoid it. If you do insist on using it, bear in mind that it may not mean what you think and that many people find its misuse unreasonably annoying. Its basic meaning in English is 'to see something in advance' and therefore to 'predict' or 'expect'. It is often used to describe the activities of soothsayers and fortune tellers ('she foresaw that you would meet a tall dark stranger') and, perhaps for this reason, it may sometimes not be clear whether the prediction in question is based on fact or not. In EU texts, it is incorrectly used in many ways that correspond more or less to the uses of the French word prévoir or the German vorsehen (both literally fore-see). We are told that 'X is foreseen in the regulation' (= set out in/provided), that 'on-the-spot checks are foreseen' (=intended/planned) and that 'our procedures foresee (= include/provide for) documentary checks'. Even when used with the right meaning, 'foresee' is often syntactically awkward as it does not, for example, normally govern the infinitive: thus 'Croatia is foreseen to join the Union in 2013' is odd, whereas 'Croatia is expected to join the Union in 2013' is not.
In the example below, the author intended to say that the fleet adjustment schemes provide for the scrapping of 367 vessels. What he actually says is that they predict it.

Example
*'In total, Member States adopted 13 Fleet Adjustment Schemes (FAS), which **foresee** the scrapping of 367 vessels accounting for 32 448 GT and 50 934 kW'*[125].

Alternatives
According to the exact meaning intended: envisage, plan, lay down in, set out in, provide (for), contemplate, expect, predict.

Formulate

Explanation
Formulate is heavily over-used in our documents; it means 'to put into or express in systematic terms', 'to express in (or to express as if in) a formula' or 'to devise'. In our work, it is often overused with a meaning akin to 'draw up' or 'prepare'.

Example
*This is estimated at €646,832 on a yearly basis, covering 4.0 FTEs to manage the documents and the website (including dealing with confidentiality issues and one 'communication manager) to **formulate** urgent safety communications)*[126].

Alternatives
Draft, draw up, produce, prepare.

125 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0037:EN:NOT

126 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008PC0664:EN:NOT

Frame (in the frame of)

Explanation
Like 'foresee', 'in the frame of', meaning 'in connection with', 'in the context of' or 'within the scope of', corresponds literally to an expression found in a number of other languages (Italian 'nel quadro di', German 'im Rahmen von', French 'dans le cadre de', etc.). Unfortunately, this expression does not exist in English.

Examples
*'In case (sic) the analysis is performed **in the frame of** a contamination incident, confirmation by duplicate analysis might be omitted in case the samples selected for analysis are through traceability linked to the contamination incident'*[127]. *'Food products would be chosen by Member State authorities **in the frame of** national food distribution programmes'*[128].

Alternatives
'In connection with', 'in the context of'. 'In the framework of' is also possible, and much loved by EU authors. However, it is not a very common expression in native English (only 30 examples in the BNC, against 23,538 in Eur-Lex) and sounds somewhat bureaucratic. In the second example, 'under' would also be a good alternative.

Global

Explanation
In English, as in other languages, global can mean both 'worldwide' and 'overall', but sometimes it can be a little confusing in the latter meaning. This became clear when an internal email was sent 'to everybody' announcing that there would be 'a global power cut'.

Alternatives
If there is any ambiguity, prefer 'general' or 'overall'.

Heavy

Explanation
'Heavy' has a number of meanings, mostly to do with weight and thickness (heavy load, heavy fog). It cannot, however, be used to render the idea that a procedure or administration is excessively complicated, slow or difficult. As well as using 'heavy' itself, EUR-Lex documents try to render this concept in a number of ways (cumbersome, burdensome, and even ponderous), but they rarely sound quite right.

Example
*'The usual reason appears to be over-**heavy** administration'*[129].

Alternatives
Complicated, excessively or unnecessarily complex/slow, etc., often 'unwieldy' (organisation, argument), or 'laborious' (process, procedure). Sometimes, we say that there is 'too much red tape'.

127 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012R0278:EN:NOT

128 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0634:EN:NOT

129 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:92001E1812:EN:NOT

Hierarchical superior

Explanation
In English, this term is used almost exclusively in the ecclesiastical context, and even 'hierarchy' and 'hierarchical' may be seen as difficult words by many readers.

Example
*'Error in the application of the case-law regarding the unlawful exercise of activities by the applicant's **hierarchical superior**'*[130].

Alternatives
Manager, line manager, boss, immediate superior, head of unit, director, etc.

Homogenise/homogeneous/homogeneously

Explanation
Homogenise is a rather unusual word in English (only two hits in the British National Corpus) and is most commonly used with reference to milk. 'Homogeneous' and 'homogeneously' are much more common, but they are more often found in the sciences and social sciences, and are over-used in our texts.

Example
*'This new approach commits Member States to work together towards shared goals without seeking to **homogenize** their inherited policy regimes and institutional arrangements'*[131].

Alternatives
Standardise/standardised, uniform/make uniform.

Important

Explanation
'Important' is often wrongly used to mean 'big' ('the most important power station in France'); it actually means: 'strongly affecting the course of events or the nature of things' or 'having or suggesting a consciousness of high position or authority'.

Example
*'The annual accounts give detailed information on the financial corrections confirmed, implemented and to be implemented and explain the reasons for which an **important** amount is still to be implemented'*[132].

Alternatives
Large, significant.

130 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:62008H0340C%2801%29:EN:NOT

131 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007SC0906:EN:NOT

132 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1109%2801%29:EN:NOT

Incite

Explanation
To incite means to 'encourage or stir up (violent or unlawful behaviour)' or to 'urge or persuade (someone) to act in a violent or unlawful way'. You cannot therefore, except in some Alice-in-Wonderland parallel universe, incite someone to buy a car, use organic farming techniques or comply with a regulation.

Examples
*'Although the slow charging stations have lower unit costs, the relative short ranges of EVs imply that the charging infrastructure needs to initially develop with a sufficient density to **incite** consumers using [= to use] such vehicles, and thus ensure utilisation rates that lead to a reasonable payback period'*[133]. *'Such activities shall not **incite** consumers to buy a product due to its particular origin'*[134].

Alternative
Encourage.

Inform (to)

Explanation
Like 'to allow', 'to inform' requires a direct object (inform the public/us/them etc.) and cannot be used without one except in passive sentences ('we were informed of something', for example).

Example
*'A number of Member States **informed** that they release regular evidence-based reports on young people's situation (sic), including their living conditions'*[135].

Alternatives
In some cases you can add the relevant object ('a number of Member States informed the Commission ...'); otherwise, announced, declared, stated, etc.

Informatics/Telematics

Explanation
Although these terms exist in English, they are not widely known or understood.

Example
*Professional experience in **informatics** related to data base management and accountancy applications'*[136].

Alternative
IT/ICT, or sometimes computer/computerised.

133 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013SC0005:EN:NOT

134 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008R1145:EN:NOT

135 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SC0256:EN:NOT

136 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:C2010/292A/02:EN:NOT

Inside

Explanation
'Inside' is often used in EU documents instead of 'within' or 'in' or even 'at' or 'by'.

Example
*'The Commission's impact assessment system aims at ensuring evidence-based policy making **inside** the Commission through an integrated and balanced assessment of problems and alternative courses of action'*[137].

Alternatives
Within, or the appropriate preposition: at/by/in.

Instance

Explanation
In EU texts, the word instance is often used to mean a decision-making body or authority. This meaning does not exist in English.

Examples
*'With regard to all fees and charges of whatever character imposed by the customs authorities of each Party, including fees and charges for tasks undertaken by another **instance** on behalf of the said authorities'*[138]. *Nevertheless, a certain percentage of non-SOLVIT cases that cannot be signposted to another **instance** is probably unavoidable'*[139].

Alternatives
Authority, body.

Intervention

Explanation
In international relations, the normal meaning of 'intervention' is 'interference by a state in another's affairs'[140] and, unsurprisingly, this can have strong negative connotations[141]. Indeed, it is often found in combination with the word 'military', and this is how many respondents understood the first example below. In any case, it implies a limitation of the sovereignty of the country or territory in question[142] and interference in its affairs which may not be well received by the public. In EU parlance, on the other hand, it is just the term normally used to designate EU-funded operations in the member countries and elsewhere, and is part of an unclear hierarchy of activities that also involves 'axes', 'measures' and 'actions' (see 'axis' and 'action' above). A further problem is that, in normal English usage, 'intervention' is often uncountable (see introduction), leading to unwanted grammatical problems.

137 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008SC0120:EN:NOT

138 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:22014A0529(01)

139 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52007SC0585

140 http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/intervention

141 'The EU has overreached itself with directives and interventions and interferences' – David Cameron quoted in the Daily Telegraph, 8 April 2013.

142 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overseas_interventions_of_the_United_States, or 'the Australian August 26 2012 "Labor frontbencher Minister Bill Shorten has conceded that "residual resentment over the federal government intervention" might have played a role in Labor losing government in the Northern Territory'.

Examples
*'The North of Kosovo: **interventions** have been very limited and there has been almost no progress in establishing the rule of law'*[143]. *'[The committee of the Regions] ... considers it necessary that development and investment partnership contracts should become a means of making national and EU **interventions** truly complementary. [The committee of the Regions] ... reiterates that such contracts must be drawn up and developed with the full involvement of regional and local authorities'*[144].

Alternatives
'Activities', 'projects', 'EU-funded activities/projects'.

Introduce

Explanation
Introduce normally means to 'present someone' or 'bring something in', whereas it is often used in our work to mean to 'submit' (as in submit an application or a report).

Examples
*'...importer should nonetheless (if he so wishes) **introduce** an application for a refund of anti-dumping duties within the six-month time limit'*[145]. *'In order to obtain accreditation ..., a candidate environmental verifier shall **introduce** a request with the Accreditation or Licensing Body from which it seeks accreditation or a licence'*[146]. *'Each State has to **introduce** a demand (sic) to be granted funding'*[147].

Alternatives
Submit, put/send (an application/request/demand) in. In the first example above, it would be even better to substitute the whole phrase with 'apply'.

Jury

Explanation
A 'jury' is a group of (usually twelve) people sworn to deliver a true verdict according to the evidence upon a case presented in a court of law. The term is also sometimes used in talent shows. In English, it is never used in the context of recruitment.

Example
*'The audit of recruitment procedures showed that the selection of applicants invited for an interview — about 80 % of applicants are rejected at this stage — was made by only one member of the **jury**'*[148].

Alternatives
Selection board, selection panel.

143 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SA0018:EN:NOT

144 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011AR0167:EN:NOT

145 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52002XC0529%2805%29:EN:NOT

146 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009R1221:EN:NOT

147 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:92001E0730:EN:NOT

148 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1214%2815%29:EN:NOT

Justify/justification

Explanation
In English, to justify means 'to demonstrate or prove to be just, right, or valid' or 'to show to be reasonable', and 'justification' is 'the act of justifying' or 'something that justifies'. In EU texts, we often find it used just to mean 'to explain' or 'provide evidence for'. By extension, especially in working papers, we also find 'justification(s)' used to mean 'supporting document(s)'. In the example below, the author uses 'justification' to mean 'evidence', whereas, from the actual wording, we would understand something like: 'the French government was unable to provide an explanation (or even an excuse)'.

Example
*'Whereas the French Government was unable to provide any **justification**, and the Commission could find none, showing that the aid in question fulfilled the conditions required for grant of one of the exceptions set out in Article 92 (3) of the EEC Treaty'*[149].

Alternatives
Substantiate, provide evidence for, explain, evidence, supporting document, proof, explanation.

Legislator

Explanation
In EU English, a 'legislator' is a body, or, in the case of the EU, two bodies together ('the European legislator' = the Council and the Parliament[150]). In regular English, on the other hand, a legislator is a person, and is defined as such in all major dictionaries, (e.g. 'a person who makes laws; a member of a legislative body' (Oxford), a 'person concerned with the making or enactment of laws' (Collins) or 'a member of a legislative body' (Merriam-Webster). Therefore, the word 'legislator' should be used to refer to a single MEP, not, for example, the whole Parliament.

Examples
*'Furthermore, the future legal bases for the different instruments will propose the extensive use of delegated acts to allow for more flexibility in the management of the policies during the financing period, while respecting the prerogatives of the two branches of **legislator**'*[151]. *'As it became apparent during the legislative process, more time is needed to allow reaching an agreement at the level of the **European legislator**, and adoption is envisaged for 2013, one year later than originally planned'*[152].

Alternatives
Legislature (= 'a body of persons having the power to legislate'[153]), legislative body/ies, the Council and Parliament. However, I fear that we may be stuck with 'the European legislator' itself.

149 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31981D0601:EN:NOT

150 This is shown quite neatly by a google search for 'the European legislator'. Currently, this throws up a wikipedia item entitled: 'legislature of the European Union'. The item goes on to explain: 'The legislature of the European Union is principally composed of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. These two institutions together are formally called the Union legislator.

151 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011AP0533:EN:NOT

152 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0632:EN:NOT

153 http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/legislature

Mission

Explanation
'Mission' has a number of meanings, none of which corresponds to the way it is most commonly used in EU texts. Generally speaking, missions, in English, are performed by secret agents, astronauts or diplomats. Otherwise they can be the places where priests, nuns, diplomats etc. work abroad (often in developing countries). In English, a mission is never a business or official trip and we would not say 'on mission' in any case. Unfortunately, however, it is a very useful word: in the EU, we 'do our mission planning', 'go on mission', fill in a 'mission order', spend our 'mission allowance', declare our 'mission expenses' and do all of this via the 'mission(s) office'. While it would be difficult to do without the word internally, we should bear in mind that it is likely to be misconstrued by outsiders.

Example
'With regard to the management of travel orders, the missions office ... has systematically coordinated the reservation of plane tickets and hotel rooms and has been able to obtain very reasonable group rates'[154].

Alternative
Often, at the Court of Auditors, 'audit/visit' ('I wasn't here last week because I was in Rome for an audit' (=on mission)), sometimes 'official trip', 'official business' or just 'business' or 'work' ('I was in Rome on business/for work'). NATO, the UN and the Canadian government often talk of 'duty travel'.

Modality

Explanation
'Modality' is one of those words which people (a) swear is correct and (b) say they have to use because the Commission does so (the example below is a case in point). The trouble is that it is not English – at least not in the meaning applied in our texts. EUR-Lex contains over two thousand cases in which it is used to mean 'procedure', but this does not make it mean 'procedure'. In English, it is a rare and quite specialised word (only 50 or so hits in the British National Corpus), whose main meanings relate to grammar, philosophy, medicine and physiology.

Example
'Evaluating such a unique scheme is a particular challenge for all actors involved. Evaluation ***modalities*** *have gone through significant changes over recent years'*[155].

Alternatives
Procedure, method, mode.

Modify/modification

Explanation
Modify is fine. It is just over-used. So when referring to changes to legislation, prefer 'amend/amendment'. In other contexts, the word 'change' is a more common alternative.

154 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31980Y1231%2806%29:EN:NOT

155 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007SA0009:EN:NOT

Example
*'The Commission ... undertook to make proposals to **modify** the regulation before issuing the next annual report, which is to be drawn up in mid-2009'*[156].

Alternatives
Amend, change.

Modulation

Explanation
In English, 'modulation' is only normally used in the fields of music and grammar and with regard to wave frequencies. It is, in any case, a difficult word and one that many native speakers may not know. In EU documents, on the other hand, it is (strangely) used to mean 'reduction' and, in the jargon of the common agricultural policy, refers specifically to a 'system of progressive reduction of direct payments allowing a transfer of funds from Pillar 1 ... to Pillar 2'[157]. This is not something that the average reader can be expected to know (or even the above-average one for that matter).

Example
*'The voluntary **modulation** should take the form of reducing direct payments within the meaning of Article 2(d) of Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003'*[158]*. Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 established a system of compulsory, progressive reduction of direct payments ("**modulation**")'*[159].

Alternatives
Adjustment, or reduction/increase as applicable. With reference to the common agricultural policy, if you use 'modulation', it must be explained.

Name

Explanation
In EU texts, particularly in administrative forms, the word 'name' is often used to refer exclusively to a person's surname, so we are asked to supply someone's 'name and first name' (usually in that order, sometimes with the word 'name' knowingly written in capital letters). More unusually, but very confusingly, it is sometimes used to refer to the person's first name to the exclusion of his/her surname (so we have 'name and surname'). In English, on the other hand, a person's 'name' is his/her whole name, so my name is Jeremy Stephen Gardner, where Jeremy is my 'first name', 'forename', 'given name' or 'Christian name', Stephen is my 'middle name', and Gardner is my 'last name', 'surname' or 'family name'. The universal convention in the English-speaking world is that the 'first name' should come first and the 'last name' last (hence their names) and that it is possible to tell which is which by the order in which they are placed; the common EU practice of putting the last name first and indicating that it is not actually the first name by placing it in capital letters is not widespread in English and may not be understood.

156 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009AE0627:EN:NOT

157 http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/glossary/index_en.htm

158 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32007R0378:EN:NOT

159 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012R0671:EN:NOT

Examples
*'CardHolderName is the **name and first name**(s) of the holder of the Control Card'*[160]. *'Title, Name and surname, Position in the applicant organisation'*[161].

Alternative
As languages and cultures differ on this point, documents and forms in English should unambiguously specify which name is which, e.g. by using the neutral terms 'given name' and 'family name'. In running text (as opposed to forms or tables), the normal order should be retained.

Normally

Explanation
Normally means 'as a rule', 'usually', 'ordinarily' or 'in a normal manner' (e.g. 'act normally!'). In EU usage, on the other hand, it often expresses something that should happen.

Example
*'**Normally**, she will come at 8 o'clock' (= She should be here at 8 o'clock); 'Are you free this weekend?' 'Yes, **Normally**.' (= 'I should be.').*

Alternatives
Supposed to, should, expected to.

Note

Explanation
In the EU's administration, the word 'note' (dictionary definition = 'a brief letter, usually of an informal nature') seems to have invaded the semantic fields of both 'memo' ('a written communication, as in a business office') and 'letter'. Many of these 'notes' are anything but brief, and none of them are informal.

Example
*'An **information note** from Vice-President Kallas and the President, addressed to the College under the title, "Review of security policy, implementation and control within the Commission", which covered physical security as well as security of information, was adopted in 2008'*[162].

Alternatives
Memo, letter.

160 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002R1360:EN:NOT

161 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012D0215(01):EN:NOT

162 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0256:EN:NOT

Notify to

Explanation

We normally notify somebody of something, we do not usually notify something to someone, and many native speakers will actually flag this construction as incorrect[163]. However, although the 'notify of' construction is much more common, the 'notify to' one does appear to exist too, but with a subtle difference in meaning. If you notify something to someone, you report it, formally, usually to some sort of authority (e.g. 'Barely one third of school absences were notified to the social services department.'). If you notify somebody of something, you inform them of it (e.g. 'residents were notified of the scheme late last week')[164]. It should be noted that you can use the 'notify of' construction in the place of the 'notify to' one, but not the other way round. Curiously, the urge to use the 'notify to' structure is so strong in EU authors that they are prepared to subvert basic English rules on word order to be able to fit it into their sentences[165]. Native speakers hardly ever use it, and non-natives might do well to follow their example.

Examples

*'Member States shall **notify** to the Commission the name, the address including electronic address, the responsible persons and the category of activities for each designated technical service, as well as any subsequent modifications thereto'*[166]. *'Contracting entities shall **notify** to the Commission, if so requested, the following information regarding the application of Article 13(2) and (3) and Article 14'*[167].

Alternatives

Send, provide … with, inform/notify somebody of something, report something to somebody.

Of

Explanation

Many of our authors seem unsure of the rules governing English prepositions, possessive constructions and noun-noun compounds. They therefore tend to use 'of' as an all-purpose preposition in the place of 'from', 'by', 'in', 'on', 'at', etc., giving us 'previous reports of the Court' instead of 'previous reports by the Court', 'communication of the Commission', instead of 'communication (letter?) from the Commission', 'EC reports of the projects' instead of 'Commission reports on the projects' etc. Moreover, phrases with 'of' are often used instead of possessive '-s' constructions or noun-noun compounds (the reports of the Court/the Court's reports, communications of the Commission/Commission communications). This type of error can lead to ambiguity even where it is not grammatically wrong; for example, in the phrase 'the system of control of the Commission', is the Commission being controlled (audited?) or is it doing the controlling?

163 http://english.stackexchange.com/questions/231861/what-is-the-difference-between-to-notify-something-to-someone-and-to-notify-some

164 Significantly, notify = report uses the same structure as report, and notify = inform uses the same structure as inform.

165 SVOI – subject, verb, direct object, indirect object, where the indirect object is governed by a preposition: 'member states shall notify the address to the commission' is preferable to 'member states shall notify to the commission the address'

166 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010PC0542

167 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464354660120&uri=CELEX:32014L0025

Operator/economic operator

Explanation
EUR-Lex has 1,057 hits for 'economic operator'. Although the term is not used in English in this way, I take it that these are simply companies or businesses. Similarly, on its own, the term 'operator' is used to cover a wide range of activities – in customs, it can mean 'importer' or 'exporter' or possibly 'shipping company', depending on the customs scheme being examined; in agriculture, it can refer to farmers or people who market or process their produce etc.

Example
*'An alert mechanism that allows competent authorities to warn other Member States of a serious risk caused by an **economic operator** to the proper and secure functioning of the Single Market'*[168].

Alternatives
It would be clearer to call things by their own names – business if you mean business, farmer if you mean farmer, importer if you mean importer, etc. As in the case of 'actor' (above), the problem can often be solved by thinking carefully about who or what the 'operators' in question actually are.

Opportunity

Explanation
'Opportunity' does not mean 'the character of that which is opportune' (I am translating verbatim from a French dictionary). The English dictionary definition of opportunity is 'a favourable or advantageous circumstance or occasion or time' (as in 'I take the opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas.').

Example
*'The Court questioned the **opportunity** of introducing these measures in such an uncertain economic climate'*[169].

Alternatives
Advisability, whether it was advisable to, whether it would be opportune to.

Orientations

Explanation
EU 'orientations' are guidelines. Orientation, in English, is uncountable and means 'the act of determining one's bearings or settling one's sense of direction'.

Examples
*'It will include policy **orientations** in all these areas for the next five years'*[170]. *'The Commission, EEAS and the MS will hold a dialogue (co-chaired by EEAS and Commission) on strategic **orientations**, general guidelines with beneficiary countries and relevant regional organisations'*[171].

Alternative
Guidelines.

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168 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0075:EN:NOT

169 Taken from a draft special report.

170 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0910

171 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0733

Perspective

Explanation
The word 'perspective' is often used correctly in EU texts to mean 'point of view' (e.g. 'from a research perspective'). However, it is also used incorrectly to mean 'expectation for the future' (as in 'financial perspectives').

Examples
*'The Foundation enjoys a more stable **perspective** in 2010. It has already put in place tighter monitoring and control of budget transfers to limit the number of transfers and prepares measures to further enhance budget planning and forecasting for the 2011 financial year'*[172]. *'… accession negotiations should be opened with Serbia as soon as possible, thereby demonstrating the EU commitment to the country's EU **perspective**'*[173].

Alternative
Outlook, prospects (usually in the plural).

Planification

Explanation
'Planification' does not exist in English, but it comes up quite regularly. The example below comes from a published Court report.

Example
*'Simplified procedures and better **planification** should make it possible to even out the caseload under FP6, improving internal control and speeding up processes'*[174].

Alternative
Planning.

Precise (to)/Precision

Explanation
There is no verb 'to precise' in English. 'Precise' is an adjective. A variant of this misuse is found in 'precision', which does actually exist as a noun in English; however, it is uncountable and means 'the quality, condition, or fact of being exact and accurate'. In EU publications, on the other hand, it is used countably (plural – 'precisions') and means something like 'detail' or 'specification'.

172 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010TA1214%2826%29:EN:NOT

173 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012IP0114:EN:NOT

174 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52004TA1130%2801%29:EN:NOT

Examples
*'This proposal for a new basic regulation is justified because there is a need **to precise** the objectives of the CFP'*[175]*. 'The Committee urges the Commission ... **to precise** which period before confinement is meant'*[176]*. 'Article 32 provides that an intervention may be justified not just by market failures but also in "sub-optimal investment situations". Without further **precisions**, this could lead to support for poorly justified financial instruments'*[177].

Alternatives
'To specify' for 'to precise', and 'detail', 'clarification', 'explanation', etc. for 'precision'.

Prescription

Explanation
Although the legal term 'prescription', meaning 'the limitation of time beyond which an action, debt, or crime is no longer valid or enforceable' is commonly used in Scotland, the State of Louisiana and Quebec, it is not well-known in the rest of the English-speaking world. In most jurisdictions, it is quite a specialised term and mainly refers to the acquisition of property rights (in England, under the 1832 property Act). It is a convenient term, but unfortunately not one that non-specialised readers would be likely to understand.

Examples
*'In Spain (Andalucía), between 2006 and 2008, 252 cases were detected by the Court where the **prescription** period of four years had already elapsed between the discovery of the irregularity and the time when the PA became aware of the facts and start the recovery process'*[178]*. 'Thus, inter alia, a uniform method for calculating the **prescription** is used, the starting point being the date on which the continuing infringement ceased, and the penalty to be imposed on each participant is only in respect of the whole of its unlawful conduct'*[179].

Alternatives
Generally speaking, 'limitation'. A 'statute of limitations' is said to apply: we can say, for example, that there is a 'three-year statute of limitations', 'three-year limitation of action', 'three-year time-bar' or 'three-year limitation period'; if it is too late to pursue an action, we can say that 'the statute of limitations has run out'; if a debt can no longer be collected, we can talk of a 'time-barred' claim or offence. The terms 'stale claim' and 'stale offence' are rather nice, but less well-known.

Project

Explanation
We sometimes find 'project (of)' used with the meaning of 'draft'. It is more common in working documents than in published reports, but some cases filter through into the Official Journal.

Example
*'A number of technical and editorial amendments were also introduced to define the scope of some provisions, to make the wording of the Directive more explicit and more consistent with the wording of the **project** of Regulation on placing on the market'*[180].

Alternative
Draft.

175 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0425:EN:NOT

176 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009AE0882:EN:NOT

177 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011AA0007:EN:NOT

178 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52011SA0008

179 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:61992C0049:EN:NOT

180 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008AG0021:EN:NOT

Provide to

Explanation
This is a bit like 'notify' (above). You provide someone **with** something; you do not provide something **to** someone.

Examples
*'It is also part of ERA's effort to **provide to** its stakeholders a thorough overview of the development of railway safety in the European Union'* [181]. *'On 20 December 2011, the Commission presented a proposal to **provide to** the Kyrgyz Republic MFA of (sic) up to EUR 30 million (EUR 15 million each in loans and grants)'* [182].

Punctual

Explanation
Punctual means 'acting or arriving exactly at the time appointed'. In the example below, the word 'punctual' seems to imply that the experts' meetings were held on time. A good thing, no doubt, but not what is meant here, which is probably 'occasional'.

Example
*'The management of the above mentioned feed sectors is subject to close co-operation with the Member States through regular (generally monthly) meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, section on Animal Nutrition, and **punctual** expert groups meetings where appropriate'* [183].

Alternatives
One-off, occasional, individual, ad hoc, periodic, regular.

Reasonability

Explanation
'Reasonability' may occur in some dictionaries, but like a number of other words in -ability and -ableness (**unavailability** is another common example much loved by IT), it is marginal and stylistically awkward. Words of this sort should be avoided where possible.

Example
*'Even if, as FNK maintains, it should be left to the crane-hire companies to interpret the concept "reasonable", which incidentally is nowhere apparent, it is still established that the **reasonability** of rates was discussed between the crane-hire companies and FNK'* [184].

Alternative
Rework your sentence to use the word 'reasonable', 'available', etc. instead.

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181 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52014SC0355:EN:NOT

182 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52014DC0372:EN:NOT

183 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1143:EN:NOT

184 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31995D0551:EN:NOT

Reflection/reflection group/reflection forum

Explanation
In English, reflection is an internal process that takes place within the individual (e.g. 'I have reflected long and hard on this problem.') and does not necessarily involve any discussion. As for the curiously named '**reflection group**', the dictionary definition is 'a discrete group which is generated by a set of reflections of a finite-dimensional Euclidean space'. I have no idea what this means.

Example
*'The Commission's **Reflection** Forum on Multilingualism and Interpreter Training[16] produced a report with recommendations on the quality of interpretation and translation'*[185].

Alternatives
Discussion, think tank, forum.

Reinforce

Explanation
The verb 'reinforce' is most commonly used in the engineering or military contexts, but it is often misused in EU texts to mean 'improve' or 'increase'. Authors who recognise it as a Gallicism are often tempted to replace it with its English equivalent, 'strengthen' (e.g. 'When strengthening the administrative capacity of a country, twinning is recognised as an important instrument'), but there are often better words.

Example
*'Furthermore the Commission initiative on health security planned for 2011 will seek to **reinforce** the coordination of the EU risk management and will strengthen the existing structures and mechanisms in the public health area'*[186].

Alternatives
Improve, bolster, consolidate, increase, or, if negative, worsen, exacerbate, etc.

Request

Explanation
There seems to be a widespread instinct that 'ask' is not a sufficiently respectable word and needs to be replaced by something of Latin origin (usually 'request'). This leads not only to clumsy sentences like: 'the European Parliament requested the Commission to clarify the Court's right of access' (which can be improved by using the more complex construction 'requested that the Commission clarify the Court's right of access' or by simply using 'ask'), but also to the incorrect construction 'to request for' (calqued on 'to ask for').

185 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010PC0082:EN:NOT

186 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0673:EN:NOT

Examples
*'the Court of Justice was **requested for** a preliminary ruling on the interpretation of Article 119 of the EC Treaty'*[187]. *'one of the conditions allowing a Member State **to request for** an "additional authorisation" procedure is the case of open points related to technical compatibility between infrastructure and vehicles'*[188].

Alternatives
Ask. In the second (active) example, 'request' can be used, but without 'for' – 'request an additional authorisation'.

Respect (to respect/respect)

Explanation
The most common meaning of the verb 'to respect' is 'to show deferential regard for'. It can also mean 'to avoid violation of' (rules, for example), but with this meaning it is over-used in EU texts and often in a grammatically awkward manner. The example below should read: 'ensure respect for property rights'.

Example
*'The existence and implementation of a coherent, effective and transparent set of laws which ensure the **respect** of property rights and the operation of a functioning bankruptcy regime'*[189].

Alternatives
Comply with, adhere to, meet (a deadline), compliance with.

Responsible

Explanation
Like 'concerned', the adjective 'responsible' means different things depending on whether it is placed before or after the noun. In EU texts we often talk about 'responsible officials' and 'responsible bodies' (meaning officials or bodies that are responsible for something), when, in English, we would say the officials or bodies responsible[190]. Actually, a 'responsible official' is one who is not irresponsible, does his job dutifully and can be trusted; another virtue of EU staff, to be considered together with the fact that they are detached and concerned (see above).

Examples
*'The **responsible** official bodies should monitor this experiment through official controls on the production'*[191]. *'**A responsible** person should be appointed by the management, who should have clearly specified authority and responsibility for ensuring that a quality system is implemented and maintained'*[192].

Alternative
Put the words the right way round.

187 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:91996E001142

188 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009D0107

189 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52005PC0623:EN:NOT

190 http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/responsible, meaning 2: NEVER BEFORE A NOUN

191 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014D0150

192 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013XX0308(01)

Retain

Explanation
Retain means 'keep', unless you are talking about lawyers, in which case it means 'hire'. In EU texts, it is often used to mean 'adopt' or 'choose'.

Example
*'As this hypothesis was not **retained** by the social partners, the conclusion will differ'*[193].

Alternatives
Select, choose, adopt, accept.

Semester/Trimester

Explanation
In English, 'semester' refers to a term in an academic institution where the academic year is divided into two terms. This is rare in the UK and Ireland, where the academic year is usually divided into three terms. 'Semester' is rarely used for periods of six months in other contexts. 'Trimester', on the other hand, is used in medicine to refer to any of the three periods of approximately three months into which pregnancy is divided. Again, it is rarely used to refer to three-month periods in other contexts.

Examples
*'... will submit a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Regulation to create a general legal basis for IMI during the first **semester** of 2011'*[194]. *'Training courses for the employees of the territorial subdivisions for population documentation were given during 2011 and in the first **trimester** of 2012'*[195].

Alternatives
Semester = half (e.g. 'during the first half of 2011')/six months/six-month period. Trimester = quarter (e.g. 'during the first quarter')/three months/three-month period.

Service

Explanation
At the Commission (but not usually at the Court of Auditors), the term 'service' is widely used with a meaning akin to 'department', which causes confusion for the casual reader of the Commission intranet, where the word is used indifferently to mean both 'department' and 'service'. 'Service' is not the generic term for 'department' in English, although it is indeed used in the names of a few government departments, especially where they offer a service (e.g. the 'advisory conciliation and arbitration service', or the 'passport service'). The first example below shows that it is also misused in EU texts to mean 'the staff of'. In the second example, it is superfluous ('In agreement with the Commission'), though some might argue that it serves to emphasise a distinction between the institution itself (or its members) and its staff. However, there is usually no need to make this distinction explicit in English, as the precise meaning is usually clear from the context.

193 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009PC0410:EN:NOT

194 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0075:EN:NOT

195 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0348:EN:NOT

Examples
*'For the financial year 2007, the **services** of the Commission's Accounting Officer carried out a follow-up of the previous year's findings'*[196]. *'In agreement with the **services** of the Commission, the group may set up subgroups to examine specific questions on the basis of the terms of reference defined by the group. Such subgroups shall be disbanded as soon as their mandate is fulfilled'*[197].

Alternatives
'The services of the Commission/Court etc.' can usually be reduced to 'the Commission/Court etc.' If you really need to avoid ambiguity (was it the staff or the Commission itself?), you can say 'the Commission's staff' or 'the Commission's XYZ department'.

Shall

Explanation
The use of 'shall' in the third person (he/she/it/they) is archaic and is only used in legislation or contracts or direct quotes from them (in inverted commas). Even here, proponents of plain English would like to see the back of it[198]. In any case, it should never be used when paraphrasing legislation or quoting it indirectly.

Examples
*'The seven members of the board are selected from among experts possessing outstanding competence in the field of statistics. They perform their duties in their personal capacity and **shall** act independently'*[199]. *'Competent authority : The central authority of a Member State competent for the organisation of official controls (sic) in the field of organic production, or any other authority to which that competence has been conferred. It **shall** also include, where appropriate, the corresponding authority of a third country (sic)'*[200].

Alternatives
Must, should, is/are, is to/are to, can, may, will, or simply the present tense of the main verb (as appropriate).

Sickness insurance

Explanation
As the correct term is health insurance, presumably one would take out 'sickness insurance' if one wanted to stay in bad health. I am afraid we are stuck with the paradoxical 'joint sickness insurance scheme', but the term should be avoided in other contexts.

Example
*'A national authority may refuse authorisation to receive treatment in another Member State only if treatment which is the same or equally effective for the patient can be obtained without undue delay from an establishment with which the insured person's **sickness insurance** fund has an agreement'*[201].

Alternative
Health insurance.

196 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008TA1110%2801%29:EN:NOT

197 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010D1016%2801%29:EN:NOT

198 See, for example : http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/scrib3&div=14&id=&page=

199 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SA0012:EN:NOT

200 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012SA0009:EN:NOT

201 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:62009C0173:EN:NOT

So-called

Explanation
This is a risky term to use; although some dictionaries allow the meaning 'commonly known as', others, like the Collins dictionary, emphasise that its use casts doubt on the veracity of the term it introduces = 'called (in the speaker's opinion, wrongly) by that name'. In the example below, it implies that the author wishes to cast doubt on the fact that the system is really transitional. Furthermore, to cite the American heritage dictionary, 'quotation marks are not used to set off descriptions that follow expressions such as so-called and self-styled, which themselves relieve the writer of responsibility for the attribution'. This use of 'so-called' followed by quotation marks is very common in EU texts (second example) and should be avoided.

Examples
*'The EESC notes that the **so-called** transitional system for the application of the minimum standard rate of VAT, set at 15 %, which was adopted back in 1992 and is due to expire on 31 December 2010, needs to be extended'*[202]*. 'With dimensions of approximately 8,5 × 30 × 23 cm, designed for monitoring the respiratory and anaesthetic gases of a patient under medical treatment (**so-called** 'Gas Analyser Module')'*[203].

Alternatives
Often, as in the two examples above, 'so-called' is superfluous and the other term can stand alone. In other cases we can say 'known as' or 'this is called'. Occasionally we may use inverted commas, though here too there is a risk that they will be misinterpreted.

Suppress, suppression

Explanation
'Suppress' is a bit like 'incite' in that it is often related to violence. It is also often combined with the adverbs 'savagely' or 'forcibly'. Indeed, the first definition of suppress in the Oxford online dictionary is 'forcibly put an end to'. You can suppress a revolt or an uprising, but you cannot suppress a bus stop or, like our 'sickness insurance', paper forms.

Examples
*Furthermore, the **suppression** of inpatient fees from 2014 seems to have resulted in increased recourse to hospital care and the same effect can be expected in the outpatient sector, where fees were **supressed** (sic) at the start of 2015'*[204].

Alternatives
Abolish/abolition, cancel/cancellation, withdraw/withdrawal.

202 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010AE1368:EN:NOT

203 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011R0112:EN:NOT

204 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52015SC0023

Third country

Explanation
The USA is one country, Canada is another, and Ireland is a third. The USA could sign an agreement with Canada to exclude a third country (e.g. Ireland) from their territorial waters (for fishing, for example). In EU texts, however, this term is widely used to mean 'countries outside the European Union', and sometimes 'countries outside whatever grouping of countries we are talking about'. This is incorrect and largely incomprehensible to outsiders. It is also objectively unclear. This is evident if we look at the (invented) example: 'he has a Schengen visa but he is not allowed to work in third countries'. Do we mean here: 'non-Schengen countries' or 'non-EU countries'?

Example
*'Regulation (EC) No 1580/2007 lays down, pursuant to the outcome of the Uruguay Round multilateral trade negotiations, the criteria whereby the Commission fixes the standard values for imports from **third countries**'*[205].

Alternatives
Non-member country/ies (or state(s)), non-Schengen country/ies (or state(s), countries outside the EU/EEA, etc.

Training (a)

Explanation
This is one of a series of gerunds used creatively but incorrectly as countable nouns (a training, a screening, a prefinancing, a planning), which is not generally possible in English. Training in English is a process (the process of being trained) and it should not be used as a synonym for a '(training) course'.

Examples
'Workers posted by a TC[206] *company (its principal place of business is outside the EU/EEA):-contract services suppliers;-ICT (including for the purpose of a **training**)'*[207].

Alternatives
Course (language course/I am on a course/I am doing a course), workshop (attending a workshop), presentation, talk, etc.

Transmit

Explanation
'Transmit' normally refers to radio or television, data, and, possibly, the (sadly defunct) Morse code. When sending something by letter, email or fax, we normally say 'send'. If we are sending something on that has been sent to us, we say 'forward' or 'send on' rather than 'retransmit'.

205 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R1156:EN:NOT

206 TC = Third Country = in this case, country outside the EU and/or EEA

207 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC0884:EN:NOT

Examples
*'The Court would thus be required to **transmit** its draft report on the same day that the Commission is required to **transmit** its synthesis report on the operation of the internal control system'*[208]. *'Where appropriate, each Member State shall **retransmit** to the NEAFC Secretary reports and messages received from its vessels in accordance with Articles 9 and 11 of Regulation (EU) No 1236/2010, subject to the following amendments'*[209].

Alternatives
Send, forward.

Transpose

Explanation
In EU English 'to transpose' means 'to incorporate the provisions of a Directive into national legislation'. It is quite handy to have a single word for this concept, but authors should be informed that only EU English uses it in this way. In mainstream English, this word is used rarely, and normally only in mathematics, music and linguistics, to mean 'to put in a different order'[210]; it is not a legal term, not even in places that have civil law systems like Scotland, Louisiana and Quebec[211].

Example
*'The Commission shall, on the basis of the information provided by the Member States, publish on its website the details of the provisions approved by each Member State which **transpose** Chapter 3 of Title XI of Directive 2006/112/EC'*[212].

Alternatives
'Transpose' has become so deeply rooted in the EU psyche that it would perhaps be utopian to expect authors to abandon it in favour of the normal English term, which is incorporate/incorporation[213] (into national law). However, anyone wishing to go on using 'transpose' should bear in mind that, in mainstream texts, they may need to be a bit more specific if they wish to be understood (e.g. 'transpose a Directive (into?)[214] national law').

Transversal/transverse

Explanation
'Transversal' (meaning 'intersecting a system of lines') occurs three times in the British National Corpus and 709 times in EUR-Lex. This is, in itself, an indication that something is amiss. 'Transverse' (meaning 'lying across; situated or lying crosswise or athwart') is much more common in regular English, with 223 BNC entries, but these nearly all refer to the fields of medicine ('transverse colon', being the most common), natural science and mechanical engineering. Neither transversal nor transverse is used figuratively to mean 'cross-cutting' or 'inter-departmental'.

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208 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010AA0006:EN:NOT

209 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012R0433:EN:NOT

210 More rarely, it can also mean 'to transfer to a different place or context'. Not even this latter meaning renders the EU concept very well and is likely to be misleading. The national incorporation of an EU Directive does not involve its transposition onto the national statute books, but the creation of national legislation to reflect its provisions.

211 It is, in any case, an uncommon word, which many readers might not know (only 42 BNC hits, 10 in the Strathy Canadian Corpus and 108 in the much larger Corpus of Contemporary American English, many of which are highly technical and none of which have the legal meaning found in EU texts).

212 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0904:EN:NOT

213 I wish to thank Professor Abe Gluck of the Harvard University Law School for providing me with a definitive, and authoritative answer to this question

214 An odd consequence of the misappropriation of this word is that one is unsure which preposition to use (we find 'to' or 'onto' in some fields and 'in', 'into' and even 'for' in others).

Examples
*'**Transverse** Activities (TAs) means actions with relevance across several ITDs and/or IADPs and requiring coordination and management across the ITDs and/or IADPs for the optimal delivery of the overall objectives of Clean Sky'*[215]. *'Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 16 November 2007 on a **transversal** approach to youth policy with a view to enabling young people to fulfil their potential and participate actively in society'*[216]. *'The Luxembourg Presidency will give priority to digital technology in a **transversal** manner, placing it at the heart of its single market policy'*[217].

Alternatives
Cross-cutting, inter + something (interdepartmental, interministerial); sometimes just 'broad' or 'general'. In cases like the last example, some rephrasing might be needed ('across the board', for example).

Travel

Explanation
In some circles, there seems to be a little bit of confusion as to the difference between the words 'travel' and 'trip'. The budget of the little known 'joint blue-sky undertaking', for example, like many of the EU's agencies, allows for expenditure for 'missions and duty travels'. Anyone who has read this far will realise immediately that the difference is a question of countability. 'Trip' is countable, 'travel' is not, at least not in its normal meaning of 'the action of travelling'. There is a rarer, countable, use, meaning 'a journey especially to a distant or unfamiliar place' (c.f. 'Gulliver's travels'), but that need not concern us here.

Examples
*'The parliament […] considers that such (= this) group should discuss inter alia the findings of the requested report concerning Members' **travels**'* [218]. *'However, several stakeholders are in favour of the development of a standardised parental consent form for **travels** in and out of the Schengen area (Frontex) or internationally (ICAO)'*[219].

Alternative
Trip, travel (singular).

Treatment

Explanation
We normally speak of data processing, not data treatment.

Examples
*'As of 2005 onwards, the significant efforts undertaken in data **treatment** and methodological developments have allowed an expansion of patent indicators'*[220]. *'Eurostat will continue its efforts to speed up the data **treatment** procedures to make data available to users faster'.*

Alternative
Processing.

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215 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013PC0505

216 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:42007X1124(01)

217 http://www.eu2015lu.eu/en/la-presidence/a-propos-presidence/programme-et-priorites/index.html

218 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464347304423&uri=CELEX:52012BP0109

219 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464347395343&uri=CELEX:52013DC0567

220 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1464347505108&uri=CELEX:52011DC0184

Valorise

Explanation
'To valorise' means to fix and maintain an artificial price for (a commodity) by governmental action. In EU texts, however, it is often used to mean 'to assign a value to' or to 'make the most of'.

Examples
*'How could the results of the work of the Agency be best **valorised** for both the public and the private sectors thus enhancing the visibility of the Agency'*[221]. *'Whereas Article 4 (a) of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1164/89 (3), as last amended by Regulation (EEC) No 2095/93 (4), lays down, inter alia, that the aid is to be granted only in respect of areas harvested, on condition that normal cultivation work has been carried out; whereas, if the aid scheme is to operate properly, a definition should be given of what is meant by harvest, on the one hand, and on the other only those cultivation practices which seek to **valorize** almost the whole of the product cultivated should be accepted'*[222].

Alternatives
Increase the value of, give a value to, enhance, make the most of, accentuate, upgrade, put to good use.

Verifications

Explanation
Verification means 'the process of establishing the truth, accuracy, or validity of something'. It is an uncountable noun and does not normally have a plural. We do not, therefore, perform or do (or even make) verifications in English.

Examples
*'Additionally, the Commission should also increase the effectiveness of its desk and on-the-spot **verifications** of the Member States' statistical reports'*[223]. *'No ex post **verifications** were carried out for any transactions made after 2008, except for grants'*[224].

Alternative
Checks.

Visa

Explanation
Visa is misused to render not only 'approval' (example 1), but also the act of giving approval (example 2). In English, a visa is generally 'an official authorisation appended to a passport, permitting entry into and travel within a particular country or region'. It is also the name of a credit card. Some dictionaries also give a meaning akin to the one used here (approve/approval). However, it is not generally understood or used in this way, to the extent that none of the 407 occurrences of 'visa' in the British National Corpus corresponds to this meaning. In any case, you certainly cannot 'perform', 'do', 'make' or 'carry out' a visa, as in the first example below.

221 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1126:EN:NOT

222 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31994R1469:EN:NOT

223 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013SA0018&from=EN

224 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013TA1213(22)

Examples

*"Delegated Authorising Officers are responsible for financial management in their services, including functions that had previously been fulfilled at central level, such as, for instance, the centralised ex-ante **visa** performed by the Financial Controller, which was abolished in the context of Reform"*[225]*. 'An important part of the system is the role played by the Control and Finance Section which has to **visa** all transactions before they can be authorised'*[226]*. 'In addition, the Commission services indicated that the ex-ante **visa** of the Delegation would be suspended unless the ratification of the amendment to the MoU was ensured by the date of May JMC meeting and a credible plan to fully address the audit findings was prepared'*[227]*.*

Alternatives

Approval, endorsement, to approve, to endorse.

225 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52004DC0093:EN:NOT

226 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000Y1201%2801%29:EN:NOT

227 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007SC1462:EN:NOT